

news

significant shorts

Man charged with street shooting of Dillon, 5,

A 26-year-old man was yesterday charged with murdering schoolboy Dillon Hall in an apparent drugs-related shooting last week. Five-year-old Dillon was gunned down as he went to buy a bottle of pop with his stepfather, John Bates, 28, near the family's home in Bolton, Greater Manchester, last Wednesday.

Greater Manchester police said that the man, of Bolton, would appear before magistrates in the town today charged with the boy's murder and the attempted murder of Mr Bates, who was shot in the abdomen.

The man was among three arrested on Wednesday when armed police swooped on a terraced house a short distance away from the street where Dillon lived with Mr Bates and his mother, Jane Hull. The two other men, aged 25 and 29, were released on police bail on Thursday. The man was charged only a few hours after magistrates had granted detectives permission to continue questioning him for a further 36 hours.

Female shadows for Lib Dem MPs

Would-be female MPs are to be invited to shadow leading Liberal Democrats to experience life at Westminster, including the spectacle of seeing men behaving badly in the House of Commons. Jackie Ballard, the party spokeswoman on women's issues, is asking all Liberal Democrat MPs to accept a woman as their shadow for up to a year. She is hoping this will prepare women for the laddish culture in the Commons, and not put them off being candidates. Liberal Democrat female MPs complain that the Commons is run on 19th-century rules as a debating society, where grey suits still dominate, in spite of there now being more women on the Labour benches.

Jenny Tonge, Liberal Democrat MP for Richmond Park, a former doctor, compared the atmosphere to being at medical school in the late Fifties, when she was 18. She said the worst offenders were Tories Nicholas Soames, Michael Howard and Michael Heseltine, who were like "grandiloquent" consultants, hanging around "thinking they are the bees' knees". Colin Brown

Aborigine warrior to go home



An Aborigine delegation is to travel to Britain to reclaim a skull believed to belong to the 19th-century tribal hero Yagan, which has been exhumed from Everton Cemetery in Liverpool.

The excavation licence was granted by the Home Office after a plea to Prime Minister Tony Blair. Aborigine leader Ken Colbung came to Merseyside two months ago hoping to return home with the skull (artist's impression, left). Yagan fought in clashes with white settlers in Western Australia. His head was brought to Britain in 1833 by a bounty hunter and sent to Liverpool City Museum in 1884 but in 1964 it was buried in a wooden box.

Germans jailed after beach trespass

Three members of a German religious group who appeared in court after illegally occupying a Cornish coastal beauty spot were sent to jail yesterday. The three men were given conditional discharges for two years after pleading guilty to offences following their arrests at Loe Bar, which is owned by the National Trust, on Wednesday, and were each ordered to pay £54 costs. But because they could not pay immediately magistrates ordered them to be committed to prison for a maximum of seven days. One was released later yesterday after his costs were paid.

A woman, 67, was also given a conditional discharge but not ordered to pay costs. A fifth man remained in custody after pleading not guilty to trespass will appear in court next week.

Health chiefs drop damages appeal

The parents of a brain-damaged child who died just days after being awarded £700,000 damages, yesterday said they were relieved that health chiefs had halted plans to reclaim the money.

Toni Calladine and her husband Peter had fought for the nine years of daughter Hollie's life to win the compensation for mistakes made during the child's birth at a Nottingham hospital, but she died eight days after they won their court battle in May. Then Nottinghamshire Health Authority said it would seek to reclaim at least part of the award, claiming that some had been meant for Hollie's on-going care. But yesterday, in a joint statement, Hollie's parents and the health authority said an agreement had been reached in which the latter would be withdrawing its appeal against the damages.

Staff defended over drowned boy

A social services chief yesterday defended his staff who were supervising a five-year-old boy whose body was found in a lake during a day trip on Thursday. Martin Hollis, of Letchworth, was on a day out with nine other children from a social services family centre when his body was discovered at Fairlands Valley Park in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, after a five-hour search. A post-mortem examination was being carried out to find out how he died. Ian White, Hertfordshire County Council's head of social services, said: "There's no evidence that he was abducted. There's no evidence that any of the staff were anything less than conscientious."

Apology

The Independent yesterday mistakenly accompanied an article about Gandhi with a picture of the actor Ben Kingsley playing Gandhi. We apologise for this error to all those readers who were upset, and we apologise to Mr Kingsley.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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Helen Yuzefova: Triumph of experience over youth

Chess prodigy falls short in bid to bridge the age gap

Ten-year-old chess prodigy Helen Yuzefova, from the Ukraine, has been pitting her wits against the best of British this week at the Smith & Williamson Championships.

With an 'International Chess Federation' rating that puts her on the fringes of the top hundred women players in the world, it is not surprising that she preferred to compete against adults, in the Harry Bates Week 2 tournament rather than enter the under-11s championship.

Her result, however, of 4.5 points from her nine games mainly against club players came as a disappointment for a young lady who looks like one of the most exciting prospects for the future.

Her below-par result was not the only disappointment of the day. When the final round of the British Chess Championship itself began at Hove Town Hall in East Sussex yesterday, the scene was set for an exciting climax.

In the first ten days of the competition, Tony Miles and Matthew Sadler had fought their way to the top of the 82-player field. Now they faced each other in a game that would decide the destination of the title and the £10,000 first prize given by the event's sponsors, the accountancy group Smith & Williamson.

After 15 minutes' play, however, the grandmasters made a move that could only be understood by the accountants among the spectators: they agreed a draw.

It was all a question of money, really. By winning the final game, silver man would have won £10,000, but a loss could have left them with only £2500. A draw, on the other hand, guaranteed a minimum of £4,000 and a maximum of £7,500 each, depending on the results of the other players' games.

On balance, the players - like poker players - agreed to share a particularly large pot. It was a decision worth the moment to take their profits rather than speculate everything on the last throw of a pawn.

While understandable, the decision was naturally disappointing both to spectators and organisers. After a decade during which the absence of corporate sponsorship had left the British Chess Championship with insufficient funds to attract our leading professional players, this year's event was able to offer a prize fund good enough to attract 12 grandmasters.

Sadly, it was precisely the generosity of these prizes that caused such a whimper of an ending. Grandmasters can be coldly calculating business men. The play-off for the title will take place today.

William Harrison

Ten-year ban for agent who behaved badly

The former agent to *Men Behaving Badly* star Caroline Quentin was yesterday banned from running an employment business for 10 years after her agency went into liquidation owing more than £480,000.

The maximum possible prohibition was imposed on Sharon Hamper at Southampton Industrial Tribunal at the end of a case brought by the Department of Trade and Industry's employment agency standards office.

Quentin (top right) was one of several celebrities - others included Lesley Ash (right), actor Craig McLachlan and television presenter Shaw Taylor - left badly off by the collapse of Ms Hamper's company last year. The four celebrities were owed around £300,000, the rest of the debts being due to other creditors.

Department of Trade and Industry minister Ian McCartney said he was delighted by the judgment. He said: "These proceedings serve notice that the DTI will not hesitate to act against agencies behaving badly... This Government will not tolerate exploitation of people at work. Employees in or out of the public eye deserve decent minimum standards of treatment by their employers or agents. This Government is determined to ensure that they receive it." The minister served notice on



any other unscrupulous agents to clean up their act quickly. "Agents who soft soap their clients whilst ripping off their cash will face severe penalties," he insisted. The tribunal made two orders. The first was against Sharon Geraldine Toms-Smith, known as Sharon Hamper, and the second against her management company formerly based in Great Queen Street, London. The orders prohibit either Ms Hamper or the company from being concerned with any employment business for 10 years.

Flying granny lands a first for Britain

Flying granny Jennifer Murray landed back in Britain today as the first woman ever to have piloted a helicopter around the world.

Having braved sandstorms, cyclones and smoking volcanoes, the 66-year-old grandmother and her co-pilot Quentin Smith, 26, finally came back down to earth in Denham, Buckinghamshire.

They were cheered in to land by well-wishers including the Duchess of York, at the end of their 97-day marathon trip. The Duchess said: "I just think she is amazing. I'm completely humbled and she did a fantastic job... I'm just totally and utterly in awe of the two of them."

During their circumnavigation, Mrs Murray and Mr Smith covered over 30,000 miles and travelled to over 26 countries. They made over 80 refuelling stops in Europe, the Middle East, South East Asia, the US and Canada, before flying home across the north Atlantic via Greenland and Iceland. Mrs Murray said: "It has been the trip of a lifetime and we have certainly been very lucky with few major technical problems and generally excellent weather. We have confounded critics who said the trip was not possible."

It was not all flying, however, for the pair, who raised thousands of pounds for Save the Children. They had time to stop off at the Monaco Grand Prix, as well as leading a fly-past in Hong Kong during the handover celebrations.

briefing

CRIME

Drug gangs cashing in on 'recreational' heroin trend

International drug gangs are deliberately targeting Britain in a drive to boost heroin sales, Customs investigators warned yesterday. They said sales were rising because of a trend towards "recreational" use of the drug by non-addicts who smoke it, rather than inject it.

While heroin seizures were down from last year's record high, the underlying trend was still upwards, said the first annual report by the Customs and Excise National Investigation Service (NIS).

The heroin market in Britain is currently dominated by Turkish criminal gangs together with "increasingly professional and organised groups" of West African nationals. "There is evidence that the UK is being aggressively targeted by such gangs to create an increased market and to satisfy a trend towards the recreational use of heroin," the report said. Traffickers increasingly appeared to be stockpiling the drug in order to manipulate street prices, it added.

Overall the NIS, which was formed last year from the merger of the Customs Investigations Division and Collection Investigation Units, prevented illegal drugs worth £1.5bn at street prices arriving in Britain. It also "disrupted or significantly disrupted" a total of 103 "major criminal organisations" in Britain as a result of a policy of targeting gangs rather than individual traffickers. Co-operation with overseas anti-drugs agencies led to the seizure of a further £1.6m worth of drugs abroad and more than 250 arrests.

The report said that seizures by the NIS of other drugs such as ecstasy and amphetamines were continuing to rise while cannabis seizures reached record levels - more than 47 tonnes.

HERITAGE

Charges put cathedral back in black

The introduction of entrance charges has helped put Canterbury Cathedral back in credit - but visitor numbers have fallen by 200,000 it emerged yesterday. The cathedral recorded a £250,381 surplus last year following the controversial decision to impose the £2 fee for visitors in June 1995. The charge rose to £2.50 in April this year - and last month the cathedral became the first in Britain to charge visitors on Sundays. But figures showed that the number of visitors to the cathedral - which ranks as Britain's fourth most popular historic site, following the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey and York Minster - fell by 200,000 last year to 1.7 million. Before the charges were introduced, financial projections showed the cathedral could run up a deficit of £500,000 each year until the end of the century.



HEALTH

Women in cancer screening study

Early screening for ovarian cancer, which kills 4,000 women in the UK each year, is to be tested in a study by the Cancer Research Campaign, it was announced yesterday.

Less than a third of patients with ovarian cancer survive more than five years and early prevention and more effective treatments are urgently needed, the charity says in a new report.

More than 2,000 women at high risk of the disease because of their family history will be recruited by scientists from the Cancer Research Campaign and the Gynaecology Cancer Research Fund. In 5 per cent of ovarian cancer cases the victim has a genetic susceptibility to the disease which increases the risk by up to 40 times. Survival rates are increased dramatically with early treatment, but in the vast majority of cases the disease is only discovered at an advanced stage. Dr James Mackay, of the charity's human genetics research group in Cambridge, said: "No one has ever tried widespread screening on this high-risk population before and we are hopeful that it will save lives." Jeremy Laurence

EMPLOYMENT

Tory reforms 'driving down wages'

The labour-market reforms of Tory years have conspired to drive down the wages of the low-skilled, according to a study yesterday from an influential think-tank.

Higher unemployment tends to put downward pressure on wages mainly in sectors which have many low-skilled workers whose pay is particularly low, it states. But changes made during the 1980s have had an additional impact, said the study from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. They have made it harder for the unemployed to avoid taking low-paid jobs and made it easier for firms to lay off workers, the institute said. The author of the study, Bob Anderson, said: "My argument is that in the long run it is not really good for the economy. [Low-paid jobs] are basically bad jobs, a lot of them. Real wages for jobs taken by the unemployed have hardly risen since 1979."

During the boom of the late 1980s, when unemployment fell rapidly, wages began to increase rapidly. But Mr Anderson added: "In this recovery, wages are not responding so much to this fall in unemployment. There has been some kind of fundamental change in the relationship between unemployment and wages."

MEDICINE

New test on way for foetal defects

Safer techniques for the diagnosis of certain prenatal disorders may be on the horizon, according to a report in the latest edition of the *Lancet*.

A study of 43 pregnant women revealed the presence of foetal genetic material in the mother's plasma, a location that previously had been overlooked, according to researchers from Britain, Italy and Hong Kong. As a result, it should be possible to screen women early in pregnancy for abnormalities carried by the father using a simple blood test, the researchers wrote. "It would mean that a proportion of women might be spared an invasive genetic diagnosis," said Dr James Wainscoat of the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford. "People had never anticipated that DNA from the foetus is mostly present in the plasma rather than in the cellular part of the blood." Current methods of testing for abnormalities rely on tests like amniocentesis which carries a risk of miscarriage.



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GET LOST IN GREAT BRITAIN.

THE PROMS

IT'S A CELEBRATION OF BRITAIN'S VOCAL WORK THIS WEEKEND AT THE PROMS, AND AS WITH EVERY PROM IT'S ONE OF THE GREAT SOUNDS OF THE YEAR.

Farming 'a danger to health'

Animal welfare group warns of 'catastrophic' consequences of modern farms

Michael Streeter

Consumers are being put at risk by factory farming and a "massive" use of antibiotics to control disease on farms, a report claimed yesterday.

The animal welfare group Compassion in World Farming - whose findings were privately dismissed as "alarmist" by the farming industry - said there could be "catastrophic consequences for human health" without urgent reform.

The CWF report, which draws together research from around the world, drew concern from consumer groups yesterday. It claims that one in three chilled, raw chickens contain salmonella, nearly half of fresh chickens contain diarrhoea-causing campylobacter and that a quarter of raw pork sausages and 22 per cent of raw beef burgers contain *E. coli*.

It also describes how food poisoning in England and Wales has increased six-fold over the past 15 years, costing the taxpayer and industry between £1bn and £3bn a year. Equally, huge amounts of antibiotics were routinely used on farms to control the "bug explosion", leading to the risk of mutated bacteria resistant to the drugs.

The report's author Dr Tim O'Brien said the main responsibility should not simply fall on consumers to ensure that food is properly prepared. "It's no good blaming the poor housewife or whoever cooks the food. The problem is at source on the farm."

He said: "The massive over-use of antibiotics on factory farms, to try to contain the inevitable explosion of bacteria and to push animals further beyond their natural growth rates, is a strategy doomed to failure. "It may constitute an uncontrolled experiment in bacterial genetic engineering on an enormous scale, with potentially catastrophic consequences for human health."

The CWF's claims brought a swift denial from the chicken industry. Peter Bradnock, chief executive of the British Poultry



Feathered foe: one in three chilled, raw chickens contain salmonella, according to the Compassion in World Farming report

Photograph: Tom Pilston

Meat Federation said: "There is no link between the way in which poultry is reared and the rise in the level of food poisoning, and there is certainly no question of a 'bug explosion' on chicken farms." Reports suggested the levels of salmonella in British chicken flocks has been reducing significantly over the last several years, he said.

Hugh Oliver-Bellasis, head of food policy for the National Farmers Union, denied that consumers were at risk, and said evidence showed that disease was no more prevalent in intensive-farmed flocks of chickens than in free-range hens.

A spokesman for Sainsbury's said they were constantly looking at the issue of food safety, but said evidence pointed away from claims that intensive farming led to more salmonella. A Tesco spokesman said they were committed to ensuring products came from animals reared to the "highest standards of welfare and husbandry".

However, Julie Sheppard, senior spokeswoman for the Consumers Association, said the report underlined that more steps needed to be taken at the farm rather than in the kitchen. "The consumer has been looked at as the last line of defence - at the moment it almost appears as if they are the only line of defence."

Food safety minister Jeff Rooker told the BBC Radio 4 programme *Farming Today* that intensive farming could cause problems and said the Government was pushing to make food safety the absolute priority of producers. "If intensive factory farming is not managed properly and corners are cut in terms of animal husbandry and animal health then we could end up with food that's not up to scratch, causing problems in the population," he said.

Mr Rooker added: "We are seeking to take measures to cut back on the use of drugs and chemicals in our food production. "Sometimes it's going to make difficulties for people operating at the sharp edge for the fast and last buck in terms of farming production. But we do have to address this issue. People want cheap food - but they want safe food above all else."

After more than a year's research into eating habits, the Government is still unable to say how dangerous it was for Britons to eat burgers and other beef products when the epidemic of "mad cow disease" was at its height, writes Charles Arthur.

Though the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) yesterday said it has commissioned a report about how much tissue with a high BSE risk went into food products, it did not admit that it has urgently been trying to establish exactly that fact for more than a year - at the request of its advisors on BSE and its human corollary, Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD). The *Independent* first reported that MAFF had a private company carrying out an audit of the destination of potentially BSE-infected material in June 1996. Yesterday, MAFF was still unable to say when the study will be completed.

Some data on eating habits has emerged. The *British Medical Journal* reports today that surveys show that in the 1980s young people, who have developed significantly more cases of the "new variant" of CJD - almost certainly caused by BSE - were eating far more kebabs, hamburgers and meat pies than older people, who have not figured in the v-CJD cases. Until strict abattoir controls came into force in 1989, beef offal that might have been contaminated by BSE, such as brain and spinal, was allowed into the human food chain.

Man wins £81,000 after unlawful arrest

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

A file on the conduct of up to seven West Midlands police officers has been passed to the Director of Public Prosecutions after a jury awarded a West Indian man £81,000 for unlawful arrest, assault and malicious prosecution.

Judge Caroline Alton referred the case to the DPP, Dame Barbara Mills, at the conclusion of the civil claim brought by former nightclub doorman Michael Smith, 41, from Wolverhampton, who the jury found suffered a fractured coccyx at the hands of officers. "This is the sort of case that combines a series of matters involving violence, racism and lying before the court," the judge said.

The £81,000 includes £45,000 exemplary damages designed to punish the police for their misconduct and £22,000 in aggravated damages, which are intended to reflect high-handed, insulting or oppressive conduct.

The case is the second to be referred to the DPP to consider a prosecution since new rules relating to police misconduct were brought in a fortnight ago.

Under the new regime, before deciding whether to prosecute the DPP must seek the advice of independent Treasury counsel and if she disagrees with it, consult the Attorney General and Solicitor General.

The jury's verdict on the malicious prosecution claim amounts to a finding that officers lied at a criminal trial of charges that Mr Smith had assaulted a member of the public and two officers. The jury also heard evidence of racial abuse by officers, including calling Mr Smith a "black kaffir". The judge instructed the jury that while Mr Smith had not "played the race card", they were entitled when assessing damages to take into account the fact that he was black and that there could have been a racial element to the case.

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SELECT 60*							
(Annual Interest)				(Monthly Interest)			
£100,000 or more	8.00	6.40	-	£25,000 or more	7.00	5.60	-
£50,000 - £99,999	7.75	6.20	-	£25,000 - £24,999	6.85	5.45	-
£25,000 - £49,999	7.65	6.12	-	£25 - £24,999	0.50	0.40	-
£10,000 - £24,999	7.55	6.04	-	GREAT NORTH POSTAL DEPOSIT ACCOUNT**			
£50 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	-	(Monthly Interest)			
SELECT 60**				£100,000 or more	6.65	5.32	-
(Annual Interest)				£50,000 - £99,999	6.20	4.96	-
£100,000 or more	7.75	6.20	-	£25,000 - £49,999	6.15	4.92	-
£50,000 - £99,999	7.50	6.00	-	£25,000 - £24,999	5.85	4.68	-
£25,000 - £49,999	7.40	5.92	-	£25 - £24,999	0.50	0.40	-
£10,000 - £24,999	7.30	5.84	-	BRANCH INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS			
£50 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	-	DEPOSIT 120 DAY ACCOUNT**			
SELECT 60**				(Annual and Monthly Interest)			
(Annual Interest)				£50,000 or more	4.90	3.92	-
£100,000 or more	7.50	6.00	-	£25,000 - £49,999	3.85	3.08	-
£50,000 - £99,999	7.10	5.68	-	£10,000 - £24,999	3.10	2.48	-
£25,000 - £49,999	7.00	5.60	-	£5,000 - £9,999	3.00	2.40	-
£10,000 - £24,999	0.50	0.40	-	£50 - £4,999	0.50	0.40	-
SELECT 60**				DEPOSIT INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNT*			
(Monthly Interest)				(Annual Interest)			
£100,000 or more	7.05	5.64	-	£50,000 or more	3.00	2.40	-
£50,000 - £99,999	6.70	5.36	-	£25,000 - £24,999	2.00	1.60	-
£25,000 - £49,999	6.65	5.32	-	£10,000 - £24,999	1.50	1.20	-
£10,000 - £24,999	6.55	5.24	-	£1,000 - £9,999	1.05	0.84	-
£50 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	-	£500 - £999	1.00	0.80	-
SELECT INSTANT**				£50 - £499	0.50	0.40	-
(Annual Interest)				DEPOSIT CURRENT ACCOUNT*			
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£50,000 - £99,999	6.95	5.56	-	£25,000 - £24,999	0.80	0.64	0.64
£25,000 - £49,999	6.90	5.52	-	£10,000 - £24,999	0.65	0.52	0.52
£10,000 - £24,999	6.75	5.40	-	£5,000 - £4,999	0.60	0.48	0.48
£50 - £4,999	0.50	0.40	-	£1,000 - £2,499	0.55	0.44	0.44
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£100,000 or more	7.25	5.80	-	£50,000 - £24,999	3.88	3.10	3.15
£50,000 - £24,999	7.05	5.64	-	£25,000 - £49,999	3.64	2.91	2.95
£25,000 - £49,999	7.00	5.60	-	£10,000 - £24,999	3.59	2.87	2.91
£10,000 - £24,999	6.95	5.56	-	£50 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	0.40
£50 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	-	DEPOSIT TESSA I*			
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INCOME BOND Third Issue**				£3,001 - £8,999	6.95	-	-
(Annual Interest)				DEPOSIT CHARITY ACCOUNT			
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1		2		3		4		5	
3. How long have you lived there? Score									
Under 2 years		2-1 years		5-8 years		9-14 years		15 years or more	
1		2		3		4		5	
4. What do you earn a year? Score									
£10,000+		£15,000+		£20,000+					
1		2		3					
5. How long have you been with your current employer? Score									
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New wave: Well-known names that are leading the resurgence of British interior design include Emily Todd-Hunter (right) and Nicky Haslam (left). Photographs: Interior Archives

Inside story on the new high fashion

Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

We are all, it seems, delighting in the domestic. After claims that cooking was the new rock 'n' roll come indicators showing interior design to be the new hot trend of the moment.

Whether it be the fan-club gathering around the carpenter Andy Kane in the BBC's decoration show *Changing Rooms* or the survey showing 17 per cent of building society windfalls will be spent on furniture and carpets, nesting is very now. Magazines dealing with home, from the ice-cool minimalist *Wallpaper* to the more traditional *Country Homes & Interiors*, are seeing sales rise and advertising pages bulge. Heals furniture and fittings store reports sales up 18 per cent.

The simple explanation is that the boom is down to the health of the housing market. But Sue Crewe, editor of *House & Garden*, believes more fundamental instincts are operating. "Even people in their mid-twenties and thirties are discovering the pleasure of creating an interior, which is very young. I think it is because everything else is so homogeneous, the same shops clog the high streets but at home you can express your individuality."

Sue Hoodless, interiors editor of *Wallpaper*, said: "People are far more design-conscious. Design consciousness has extended from fashion into other areas of life."

Robert Whitaker, manager of the Fulham Road branch of the Fired Earth tile company, believes the boom is prompted by television and magazines. "The proliferation of... programmes like *Home Front* has definitely had an effect. It is more than just the buzz in the shop when the designers off the TV are in here. People are more willing to have a go themselves and attempt much more sophisticated projects."

Programmes like *Home Front*, *Changing Rooms* and *All Mod Cons* are attracting good audiences for the BBC and provide relatively cheap programming, because they rely on ordinary people.

There is anecdotal evidence that interior designers are proliferating because of the boom. At £50 an hour for the cheapest they may seem like a luxury for the elite, but Ms Crewe insists they can be worthwhile if they can provide some consultation, and sketches for under £500. "The British tend to think using a designer is an admission of defeat," she said. "Which is... dotty, because we don't try to fill our own teeth."

The most famous interior designers may be those who feature on television programmes, like Linda Barker and Graham Wynne, but to the cognoscenti, names like Nicky Haslam, Emily Todd-Hunter and Jonathan Reed are leading a wave of British successful design talent. Ms Hoodless believes there needs to be a re-definition of the term architect, because in her eyes the most important interior designers are architects like John Pawson, David Chipperfield or Urban Salon, who design not just decor, but change whole spaces and then design the furniture to fill it. The only worry for the designers, magazines, TV producers and the fittings and furniture-makers is that the pace of change among the trendy may mean that soon interior design may become the new rock 'n' roll.



Des res takes on a pink tinge as estate agents spot a sale

Michael Streeter

Building developers and estate agents are increasingly targeting the gay community as a potential market for new and renovated homes.

Around the country building firms are advertising houses and flats in the gay press and at gay events in an effort to increase sales.

In select parts of central London such as Covent Garden, where homosexuals can form up to half the residential population, the trend is going one step further, with some offices and homes being developed specifically to appeal to the gay community.

At one Covent Garden estate, agent a spokeswoman said flats were being built with more style and features, and at higher cost than normal to reflect what is perceived, as the both the higher artistic expectations and larger spending power of wealthy gay professionals.

The spokeswoman said: "Developers are paying attention to providing clean lines, extra space, wooden floors, nickel taps and that kind of thing. A lot of gays who live around here are very successful, working in the City, or the media, and have the money and the taste to pay for it."

She added: "Their homes are making a statement to visitors."

Developers have also built offices in nearby Soho which are advertised as "gay-friendly", she said.

Tim Mulligan, director of Bridge estate agents, who handles developments in London's Shoreditch area, said they marketed in the gay press as an additional marketing tool to sell properties such as loft apartments.

"It's not solely about having gay people in the properties - they are open to anyone. But we are trying to please them and satisfy their needs. It's more about location than anything else."

Homebuilders Bellway advertise at the annual Mardi Gras gay festival in Manchester but stressed this is simply part of their policy to market their homes as widely as possible.

"There are a number of other companies - Bellway is one of them having a sales office there."

Paul Clements, editor of *The Pink Paper*, Britain's largest gay paper, which carries adverts for housing in its pages, said the move was another step towards the integration of the community.

"I absolutely support the way that gays are having houses marketed for them."

Peter Hatchell, of gay-rights campaigners OutRage!, said the trend reflected the perception that many lesbian and gay people with no children had high disposable incomes, but warned that it only concerned a section of the community.

"This is a solution for well-off middle-class professional gay people but it does nothing to remedy the intimidation experienced by less well-off homosexuals living in run-down inner city housing estates."

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news

Cardiff is wooed by a tall, dark stranger

Rory Heath
Brecon

Peter Mandelson was in sun-soaked Cardiff bright and early yesterday to press a case for Welsh devolution.

The Minister Without Portfolio struck a chord with a large crowd outside HMV in Queens Street, where Stereophonics were launching a new single, "A Thousand Trees".

The band, from the Cynon Valley, watched while Mr Mandelson autographed posters for the new record. Their leader, Kelly Jones, was moved to promise: "You've got my vote for an assembly. I must say our music isn't particularly political, but Wales needs a voice of its own."

Mr Mandelson's line, "A strong 'Yes' vote on 18 September will give the people of Wales the opportunity to develop distinctive policies reflecting their special needs," seemed well-received. The only snag was that most of the hundreds present were under 18 – too young to vote in the 18 September referendum. Jessica Price, a local sixth-

former, said: "If I was old enough I suppose I'd vote 'Yes'." Then she hurried into the record shop to buy the new offering.

Four 15-year-olds from Cowbridge in the Vale of Glamorgan – an affluent area where off-roaders appear to outnumber Mondeos – were more enthusiastic. "I think it's a pity we don't have an Assembly," Rhodri Williams said. "Actually, I support Plaid Cymru, but on this everyone should get together."

A statue of Aneurin Bevan – a name not much mentioned by New Labour – guards one end of the pedestrianised shopping street. At the other a better-skelter stood invitingly. Mr Mandelson needed little persuading to ride a coconut mat down the 60ft descent not once, but twice.

Mrs Pauline Smith, a Romany gypsy, then offered to read the ministerial hand and tried to interest its owner in a lucky charm. Mr Mandelson declined both offers.

"He looks like a tall dark stranger to me," said Mrs Smith. "What did you say his name was?"



Spinning down: Mr Mandelson with Peter Hain MP in Cardiff yesterday

Photograph: Huw Evans Picture Agency

Police blunder allows Nazis to get away

Ian Burrell

Nearly 150 Nazi skinheads were able to stage a rock concert in the Midlands after they slipped through the net of a police operation to contain them, it emerged yesterday.

Searchlight, the Anti-Fascist organisation, said the event took place last weekend at a community hall in a suburb of Coventry.

Hundreds of police had earlier been involved in an operation to prevent a large-scale rally taking place in South Wales. Almost 1,000 skinheads, including contingents from Germany, Holland and France, were stopped by police patrols and turned back.

Gerry Gable, editor of the organisation's magazine, *Searchlight*, said that a small hardcore group of skinheads had re-routed to Coventry, where the concert took place in the evening.

He said: "Until then, the police operation had been first-class. Why did the wheel come off the wagon in the West Midlands?"

The event, intended to take place in the Welsh valleys, had been widely advertised in far-right literature across Europe and skinhead bands from the United States and Germany had been invited to play.

But Searchlight was able to alert the police who ran a special control-room in South Wales for two weeks, monitoring the planned event.

Glenys Kinnock, the South Wales European Parliament MP called on the authorities to make every effort to stop the concert taking place.

Last week, a 29-year-old Cardiff man was arrested and charged with public order offences after police raided his flat and seized weapons and literature.

Members of an American band that had flown to Britain from Oregon to take part were turned back by immigration officials.

On Saturday, as the skinheads tried to find an alterna-

tive venue, a huge police operation led by the South Wales and Leicestershire forces helped to contain them as they moved east, over the English border and into the Midlands. Warwickshire Police had monitored a group of neo-Nazis who had gathered outside a pub to the east of Coventry. "We were aware of their presence but there wasn't any trouble," said a spokeswoman for the force.

But Searchlight said this group then met up with other skinheads at a hall, two miles away in Coventry, in the West Midlands force area. Police were not present at the event nor were they called on to attend.

Last night, Mr Gable said that the anti-fascist movement was nevertheless delighted that the full-scale rally which had been planned by the racist Blood and Honour organisation had failed to go ahead as planned.

He said: "I think our operation has been a success because there has been an arrest in Wales and exclusions of some of the Americans. No foreign bands were able to play in the final event and the numbers were reduced from up to 1,000 to less than 150."

The failings of the rally will have caused a considerable loss of face for the British skinheads who were once revered by their overseas counterparts but have been repeatedly unable to stage large-scale concerts which are commonplace in Germany.

Meanwhile, there are fears that members of the far-right Combat 18 group are planning to cause trouble in Denmark this weekend as part of a Nazi commemoration of the anniversary of the death of Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy.

The authorities in Roskilde have controversially allowed the event, where supporters dress in Nazi costume and carry flags with swastikas, despite widespread violence when the rally took place in the town two years ago.

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Cyprus peace talks collapse into chaos

Constantine Buhayer
Montreux

The Swiss lakeside resort of Montreux has joined an illustrious list: that of places where the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities have failed to reach an agreement on Cyprus.

The Greek Cypriot President, Glafcos Clerides, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktash, arrived last Monday at their hotel perched in splendid isolation above Lake Geneva.

Under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, and coached by diplomats from the European Union, United States, Britain, Sweden, Greece, Turkey, Russia and other countries, they discussed their differences - but without agreement.

After the end of the talks, Mr Diego Cordovez, special adviser to the Secretary-General, condemned the two sides for leaking top-secret discussion papers that were intended purely as a series of proposals open to debate.

"The leakage to the press caused damage because you

cannot negotiate publicly," he said. Mr Cordovez acknowledged that a main task of his job will be to reduce such instances that help trip up the peace process in Cyprus.

The failure of the talks reflects negatively on his own recent involvement in the Cyprus problem. During last month's meeting of the two sides in Troutbeck, near New York, he had forecast that Montreux would be a "defining moment".

Yesterday, both Cypriot sides were critical of his efforts, but the diplomats present showed much greater understanding.

Mr Denktash accused the EU of "throwing a bombshell" in its Agenda 2000 which included the announcement that accession negotiations for Cyprus to join the EU will begin in January 1998.

If that aspect of the agenda is accepted by the EU Council of Ministers, meeting during the Luxembourg summit next December, he promised to stop the negotiations. "We object because the EU application was made by the Greek Cypriots and no Cypriot government has represented the whole of Cyprus for the last 34 years," he said.

He accused the Greek Cypriot side of attempting to colonise the Turkish Cypriot north through the EU.

One hour later, President Clerides promised that "if there is any interference in the accession process I will not be negotiating".

Turkish and Turkish Cypriot diplomatic sources said that if the EU negotiations with Cyprus begin, it will be a *de facto* recognition by Brussels that the island consists of two sovereign states. The Turks argue that since the Greek side technically fulfils the Maastricht criteria for both EMU and accession, there is only the political side left to sort out.

The Greeks will blackmail the EU into dropping any political reservations they may have about the problem," said an analyst from the Turkish foreign ministry.

The Greek Cypriots spoke of failure. The UN was slightly more optimistic. "We are back where we started, but not entirely," Mr Cordovez told a press conference yesterday.

Under the shadow of Montserrat's volcano



A church and cemetery in a village in the Soufriere Hills on the Caribbean island of Montserrat devastated by volcanic eruptions. The island's capital, Plymouth, is now almost totally deserted. Photograph: Carlos Hernandez/Reuters

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£10,000 - £24,999	3.10	2.48	1.80	1.60	1.50	0.30
£5,000 - £9,999	3.00	2.40	1.80	1.60	1.50	0.30
£500 - £4,999	0.50	0.40	0.30	0.20	0.10	0.00

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£25,000 - £49,999	2.75	2.20	2.15	2.04	1.90	0.20
£10,000 - £24,999	2.35	1.96	1.80	1.60	1.50	0.10
£5,000 - £9,999	2.15	1.73	1.60	1.50	1.40	0.00
£500 - £4,999	0.30	0.20	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00

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£50,000 or more	3.10	2.48	2.10	1.65	1.30	0.90
£25,000 - £49,999	2.10	1.68	1.65	1.32	1.04	0.72
£10,000 - £24,999	1.65	1.32	1.30	1.04	0.72	0.00
£5,000 - £9,999	1.30	1.04	1.04	0.72	0.00	0.00
£500 - £4,999	0.90	0.72	0.72	0.00	0.00	0.00

SIXTY DAY ACCOUNT*	(Monthly)	£50,000 or more	£25,000 - £49,999	£10,000 - £24,999	£5,000 - £9,999	£500 - £4,999
£50,000 or more	3.06	3.10	2.45	2.48	2.48	2.48
£25,000 - £49,999	2.06	2.10	1.66	1.68	1.68	1.68
£10,000 - £24,999	1.64	1.65	1.31	1.32	1.32	1.32
£5,000 - £9,999	1.24	1.30	1.03	1.04	1.04	1.04
£500 - £4,999	0.90	0.90	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40

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£50,000 or more	3.05	2.44	2.05	1.64	1.13	0.85
£25,000 - £49,999	2.05	1.64	1.60	1.28	0.92	0.65
£10,000 - £24,999	1.60	1.28	1.28	0.92	0.65	0.38
£5,000 - £9,999	1.13	0.92	0.92	0.65	0.38	0.10
£500 - £4,999	0.85	0.65	0.65	0.38	0.10	0.00

THIRTY DAY ACCOUNT*	(Monthly)	£50,000 or more	£25,000 - £49,999	£10,000 - £24,999	£5,000 - £9,999	£500 - £4,999
£50,000 or more	3.01	3.04	2.41	2.43	2.43	2.43
£25,000 - £49,999	2.01	2.05	1.62	1.64	1.64	1.64
£10,000 - £24,999	1.59	1.60	1.27	1.28	1.28	1.28
£5,000 - £9,999	1.14	1.15	0.91	0.92	0.92	0.92
£500 - £4,999	0.80	0.80	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40

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£50,000 or more	3.05	2.44	2.05	1.64	1.13	0.85
£25,000 - £49,999	2.05	1.64	1.60	1.28	0.92	0.65
£10,000 - £24,999	1.60	1.28	1.28	0.92	0.65	0.38
£5,000 - £9,999	1.13	0.92	0.92	0.65	0.38	0.10
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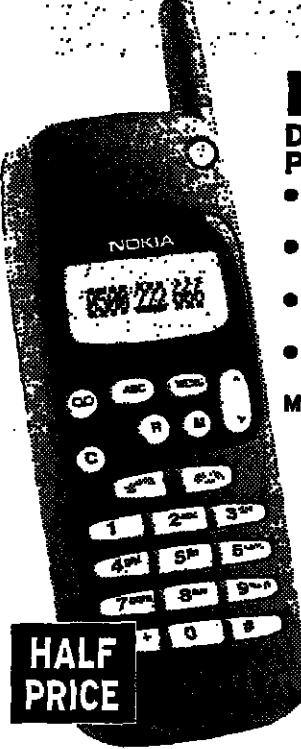
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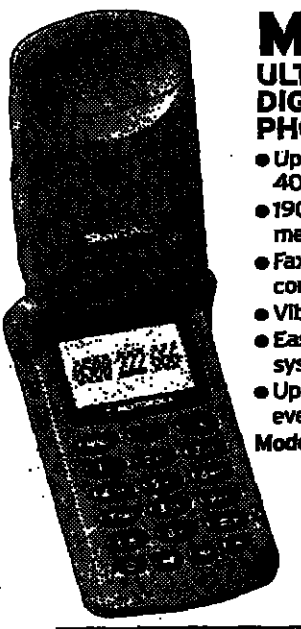


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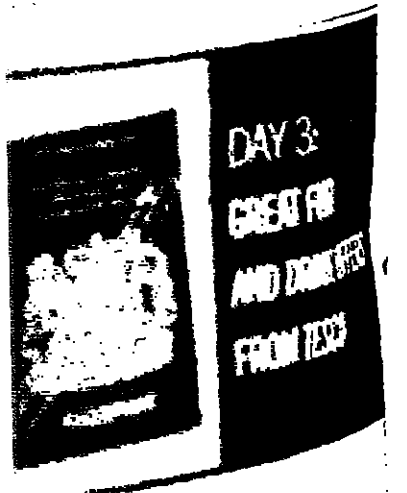
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Lang: sees Britain joining European Monetary Union

Warm welcome in France for Blair

Joanna Lee
Paris

Excitement is mounting in the tiny French village of Saint-Martin-d'Oydes as residents prepare to welcome the Prime Minister, his wife, Cherie, and their three children. The family will stay in the 12th century country house belonging to the judge David Keene QC, and the French Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin will be staying around 20 miles away. It is likely that the two prime ministers will meet

informally some time next week.

Mr Blair will also be able to bask in the praise and support of the French Socialists, who were delighted by his electoral victory. Speaking from his holiday home in the southern region of Bouches-du-Rhône, Jack Lang, the President of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Socialist MP and former Minister of Culture during the Mitterrand years, will not hear a bad word said against the British Prime Minister. "The new Labour government has a fresh,

young spirit about it that shows great promise for the future," he said.

"Although I found the electoral campaign somewhat reserved and cautious, I have been very impressed by the proposals of the Government over the last three months, particularly regarding decentralisation, health and education." Mr Lang draws parallels between France in 1981 and Britain today. In 1981, President Mitterrand became the first ever Socialist president and ap-

pointed the first left-wing government for over two decades. He remained in power for 14 years, leading a left wing government for ten of those.

"The mood of both the Government and the people during this period in France was very similar to that in Britain today. People had a new confidence and enthusiasm, as well as a strong sense of liberation. This atmosphere is very important if the Government is to be successful."

The French Socialist party of today has not modernised as

much as New Labour has. Mr Jospin's approach is still far more interventionist, compared with Mr Blair's more liberal approach. But Mr Lang explains that "this difference in policy is due more to a difference in culture and tradition, than to a fundamental difference in ideology." He is keen to underline the two leaders' "common interest in human rights and social causes, as well as a growing, dynamic economy."

Mr Lang is equally enthusiastic about the Labour govern-

ment's foreign policy. "It is positive, constructive and progressive, incorporating an international humanitarian vision". Mr Lang has even written to the French foreign and defence ministers, Hubert Vedrine and Alain Richard, advising them to follow Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook's lead in banning arms sales to countries with poor human rights records.

Mr Lang believes that Mr Blair's European policy is in keeping with British politics. However, he is convinced that

the single currency will go ahead as planned in 1999, and he also believes that Britain will enter at some stage, although probably not in the first round. "If the Government and the people need more time, so be it. It is better that Britain enters in her own time and of her own accord, rather than being forced... Mr Blair is serious and attentive in his approach to European affairs and I believe that he will come to the right decision." - that Britain is better off in than out.

Striking a blow for tolerance in Memphis, the city of the Kings

David Osborne
Memphis

There are ten of us on the forecourt of what was once the Lorraine Motel, on tiny Mulberry Street in downtown Memphis. You would think there would be more of us. These days it is the National Civil Rights Museum and above us is Room 306 and the balcony where on 4 April 1968, Dr Martin Luther King was shot dead.

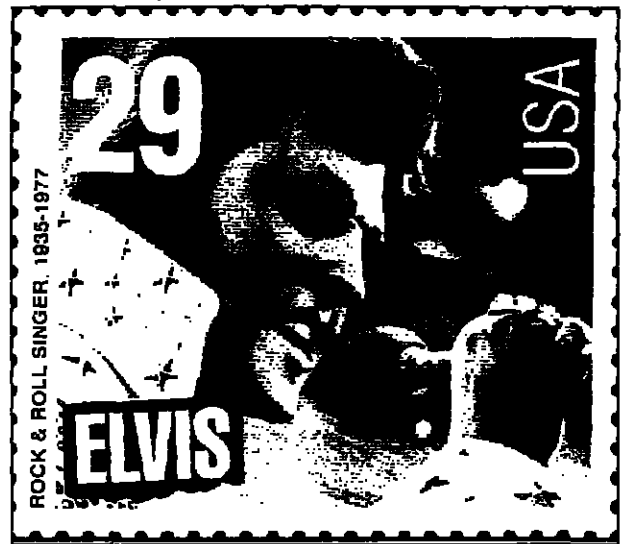
The hordes visiting Memphis this week are interested in another king altogether. It is only five blocks from here to the newly-opened Elvis Presley Memphis restaurant on Beale Street, where, at five in the afternoon, the fans are cranking behind the velvet ropes to wait an hour for a table inside.

The contrast - the nearly vacant tarmac at the Lorraine versus the crush at the restaurant and even more at Presley's Graceland home - invites a snobbish reaction. What are they doing flocking to honour an entertainer who died fat and feckless when they could be here learning about the greatest civil rights leader America ever had?

Because these people are on holiday. Because eating deep-fried peanut butter - one of the king's favourites - is a giggle. Because pecking at the gold-leaf wash basins aboard the Elvis' private jetliner, the Lisa Marie, at Graceland is fun. Because Dr King could sermonise but could not sing. And because today is 20 years since Elvis' death.

And maybe because they know that Elvis mattered also. Who influenced America more in the second half of the century, King or the King?

Ask the Nixon Library which photograph is most requested by its visitors - the President with Presley. Ask the US Post Office which of its commemorative stamps has outsold all others - the 1993 Elvis stamp. Ask RCA Records who is the



biggest-selling artist of all time - Elvis, of course. It may be a stretch to say that Elvis was the father of Rock and Roll. What about Louis Jordan or Bill Haley before him? But Presley's musical legacy is unanswerable. He borrowed the rhythm and blues sound that had been the domain of mostly black artists, added inspiration from gospel and country, and translated it into rock and roll for the mainstream, black and white.

Wink Martindale, a TV game show host today, this week reminisced about the evening in July 1954 when Sam Phillips of Sun Records came into the Memphis radio station where he worked with the first Elvis single ever, *That's All Right Mama*, and on the flip side, *Blue Moon*. Until then, the station's ratings had depended on giving black music to its white teenage audience.

When they heard the record, "everyone thought Elvis was black", Martindale remembered. "We immediately knew that something really special was happening, but not one of us understood that the course of popular music was being literally changed overnight."

The delivery of the black beat to the white population was arguably as great a gift to racial integration as any achieved by Dr King. It is ironic then, that almost all of those mobbing the Graceland shrine are white.

More seminal was the impact on buttoned-down fifties America of Elvis' sexually-charged, pelvis-grinding stage performances, especially his early appearances on television. So deep was the shock over his gyrations and his phallic guitar gesturing, that by his fourth appearance on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, viewers were only allowed to see him from the waist up.

"Elvis was the first public controversy of the silent, fifties generation," says John Bakker Professor at the University of Memphis and an Elvis scholar. "People, until then, had not argued about anything, not even about Korea. And from Elvis came the seeds of the social and cultural revolution that hit America in the sixties."

Hard to fathom, however, is the power of Elvis mania today. His record sales have hit a billion and a half and are accelerating. Elvis Presley Enterprises (EPE), which owns

Graceland and the Presley image, is a multi-million-dollar concern that has plans for a casino and hotel at Graceland and for a world-wide chain of Elvis restaurants. London should have one soon.

What is driving the craze? Is it EPE, which works so hard to protect Elvis from negative publicity - there will, for instance, never be a video of his last concert tour when his once-handsome features had become marshmallow. Conversely, is it the Elvis muck-raking of the tabloid media? Or the "Elvis lives" nut-cases who keep seeing him at their supermarkets? Or the legion of Elvis lookalikes the world over?

Or is it, simply, the voice? Spare a thought, meanwhile, for Dr King. The 30th anniversary of his death is just nine months away. What kind of baloney will that get? Not much of a one to judge by the small table offering Civil Rights Museum souvenirs at Memphis Airport gift shop this week. Edged by the nearby monster Elvis display, it has a small plastic sign on it that reads: "Clearance Sale".

Leading article, page 13



Good rockin' tonight: Presley onstage in Tupelo, Mississippi in 1956, more than two decades before his death. Above, one of 1993 postage stamps that have been America's best-selling ever. Photograph: Jean Cummings

significant shorts

Two killed as gunmen ambush Bosnian Muslims

Two Bosnian Muslims were killed and another was wounded by automatic gunfire in eastern Bosnia, Muslim-Croat federation authorities said. The shooting took place near a former front line in a village inhabited by Serbs before the 1992-95 Bosnian war, the federation said. The federation interior ministry said the Muslims were ambushed by gunmen as they drove to cut firewood in the Sapna region. Reuters - Sarajevo

Albania peace verdict

The UN Security Council has registered the end of a peace-keeping mission it authorised for Albania. In a statement read at a formal meeting after hours of scripted speeches, the council said the mandate of the 7,000-strong Italian-led force had been fulfilled successfully but that the Albanian people and leaders had primary responsibility for the future of their country. Reuters - New York

Hong Kong's moist record

The first eight months of this year have been Hong Kong's wettest period in 113 years, since records began in 1884, weather experts said. During the period 2,611.3mm of rain was recorded, breaking the record of 2,610.4 mm set in 1973. Reuters - Hong Kong

Hungarian challenge

The Hungarian Prime Minister, Gyula Horn, challenged his Slovak counterpart, Vladimir Meciar, to end delays in safeguarding the rights of Slovakia's 500,000 ethnic Hungarians. After discussing with Mr Meciar a nine-point Hungarian plan to improve relations between the countries, Mr Horn said responsibility for ending tension lay squarely with the Slovak government. Reuters - Gyor

A quiet end

A matron allegedly confessed to killing at least 18 patients so that she would not be disturbed at night and then jumped from a third-storey room in a suicide attempt. Aida Nur el-Din, 42, allegedly killed the patients with drugs stolen from the hospital dispensary, the *Egyptian Gazette* said. AP - Cairo

First children join Hong Kong fathers

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

The first batch of Chinese-born children entitled to live in Hong Kong under a controversial new scheme entered the territory yesterday clutching hurriedly issued certificates of entitlement.

Ranging in age from two years old to twenty-one, the 153 immigrants passed across the

border at Lowu to what their parents hope will be a more prosperous future. They are among more than 66,000 offspring who have the right to live in Hong Kong under its new mini-constitution, the Basic Law. This says any child with a Hong Kong resident as a parent is entitled to live in the territory.

The large numbers of men crossing the border from Hong Kong has ensured the birth of

even larger numbers of children who, under British rule, had no automatic right to live there.

Having given these children new rights, the incoming government got cold feet, fearing that the social services and schools would be swamped with hordes of Chinese-born youngsters. One of its first acts was to introduce the certificate of entitlement to stem the influx. Although it is not admitted,

the purpose of the scheme is to use the slow grinding wheels of Chinese bureaucracy to decelerate the process of application for residence. However, a great many children who were smuggled into Hong Kong under British rule put a spanner in the works by giving themselves up to the authorities, thinking that now they would be able to remain with legal status. This proved to be a mistake

because the government adopted a hard line and started rounding them up for deportation. The deportations have been stopped by a rush of court challenges to be heard next month, which are shaping up to be a constitutional battle led by Hong Kong's top lawyers who argue that the government is breaching its own constitution and undermining the rule of law. The government says no fun-

damental rights are being taken away but the exercise of them is being curtailed by the practical need to verify the status of those applying to live in Hong Kong. These arguments passed over the heads of the children who arrived yesterday. Most looked rather bewildered by the fuss which greeted their arrival. Others must be wondering what it will be like to live with fathers they hardly know.

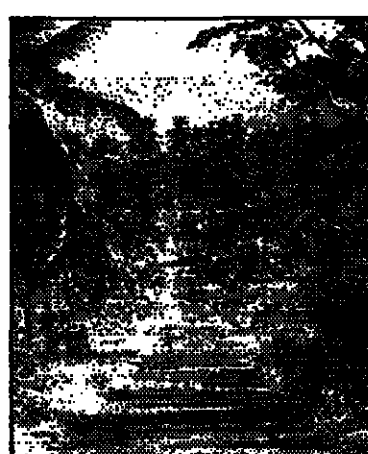
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Lessons of history: Rows of schoolchildren listening to a speech by India's Prime Minister, Inder Kumar Gujral, at the Red Fort in Delhi yesterday. As diverse and divided as Pakistan, India has nevertheless been able to maintain 50 years of unbroken democracy. Photograph: Andrew Buurman

Pakistan 50 years on: Despite decades of political strife, people still came together Celebrations for a country still divided

Amrur Iqbal
Islamabad

A small crowd at Islamabad's folk festival, held to celebrate Pakistan's 50th independence anniversary, watched as two horses danced to a folk tune. A group of youngsters joined the dance while others clapped to keep the beat. All were dressed in traditional costumes, but those who watched them were wearing blue jeans, fashionable western trousers and shirts. Unlike the craftsmen, who spoke one of Pakistan's four provincial languages, they spoke a mixture of Urdu and English, the two official languages of the country. But not all in the crowd were alike. Those from Islamabad looked cleaner and had a fresh, confident look. Those from the adjacent city of Rawalpindi looked a little different. They were not as fresh as the other group and did not use English. Those from the nearby villages were different from both the groups. Wearing long cotton shirts and trousers, with little cotton scarves around their shoulders, they gave a distinct rural look. It was a vivid illustration of the different faces of Pakistan, 50 years after independence.

Not all of the country has welcomed the celebrations of the past two days. "All this dancing and singing is a sin, we should not allow this in Pakistan as it was created for Islam," said Naveed Ahmad, a student from a local college and a supporter of the Islamic militant Jamiat-i-Islami group. The group is affiliated with Pakistan's Jamaat-Islami party which opposes such displays of popular entertainment. "While people have little to eat, our rulers are wasting money on bringing dancers and singers to Islamabad to celebrate the golden jubilee. This can't be permitted," said Jamaat's leader, Kazi Hussain Ahmad, while addressing an independence day rally in the north-western city of Peshawar.

In the northernmost corner of Gilgit, police arrested 16 students for allegedly desecrating the national flag. The people of Gilgit, a semi-independent principality until 1947, have not been fully merged with the country because Gilgit was technically a part of the disputed Kashmir territory. In the south, a small group of Sindhi nationalists refused to participate in the national celebrations because they claim that the government was turning the native Sindhis into a minority by settling people from other areas in Sindh. The other largest ethnic group in Sindh is that of Mohajirs, the Muslim immigrants from India who dominate the cities of Karachi and Hyderabad. Although they came to Pakistan 50 years ago, these people are still struggling to find an identity in Pakistan. They are still called "Mohajirs" which means "refugees" in Urdu and Arabic.

The religious divide has pitched Pakistan's Sunni majority and its small but powerful Shiite minority against each other. Hundreds of people have been killed in religious and ethnic violence in Pakistan during the current year.

Then there are those who see Pakistan as part of the Subcontinent and thus sharing a common culture with India. There are others who see Pakistan as integrated with the greater Muslim world of Central Asia and the Middle East and don't want to hear about any affiliation with India, even if only cultural.

There is a third group of intellectuals, who claim that Pakistan has existed as an entity separate from India even 3000 years ago, when the Indus valley had its own identity.

Fifty years of political instability and economic deprivation has further complicated the scene. There are more than 20 political parties in the country which keep wrestling with each other for power. This continued bickering has allowed few elected governments to complete their tenure, and the army has ruled Pakistan for 25 of its 50 years of independence.

This is what the intellectuals in Pakistan describe as the country's identity crisis. But somehow these crises only seem to bother the country's politicians and intellectuals. Most Pakistanis have learnt to live with their country's complex and often confusing cultural, ethnic, religious and political divides.

Abdul Huq, a senior accountant at a multi-national company, said: "I live in Islamabad which is a modern city. I work on computers. Surf the Internet. Exchange business messages with Europe and North America every day and yet when hear the call for prayers, I turn off my computer, move my face towards Mecca and say my prayers. I see no conflict between my faith and my work."

Japan seeks to bring North Korea in from diplomatic wilderness

Richard Lloyd Parry
Tokyo

In the latest sign of a mounting international effort to open links to North Korea, Japan announced yesterday that it will hold talks aimed at establishing full diplomatic relations with the embattled Stalinist government. The announcement was given added symbolism by its timing, on the 52nd anniversary of Japan's surrender at the end of the Second World War, which also marked the Koreans' liberation from 35 years as a Japanese colony. The meeting, to be held at the Japanese embassy in Peking next Thursday, will aim to establish an agenda for formal talks on normalisation, which have been suspended since 1992.

The talks between the two governments will be elevated to deputy director level so as to move the process more efficiently, the Japanese foreign minister, Yukihiko Ikeda, said yesterday. The diplomatic challenge of dealing with North Korea is especially complicated for Japan. No country, apart from South Korea, has more to lose in a potential conflict on the peninsula, which is less than a hundred miles from Japan at the closest point. Over the years, politicians from Tokyo have made frequent unofficial visits to Pyongyang, whose economy has been immeasurably helped by contributions from ethnic Koreans living in Japan. But, publicly at least, Koreans North and South are unable to forgive Japan for its brutal annexation of their country in 1910. Recently, a bizarre complication has arisen in the form of 20 or so missing persons cases, reported in remote coastal regions on Japan in the late 1970s.

Evidence from North Korean defectors suggests that the missing people may have been abducted by North Korean spies and transported by boat to Pyongyang, where some are still living. The North Koreans walked out of the last set of talks in 1992, after Japanese diplomats raised the issue. But recently, the North Koreans have hinted that they are willing to consider another Japanese request for home visits by some 1800 Japanese women who moved to the North after marrying Korean men. Last year, Tokyo sent \$5.2m-worth of food aid to the North to alleviate the creeping famine there, but suspended further aid after the abduction allegations. Last week, however, after months of procrastination, North Korean officials joined American, Chinese and South Korean counterparts for preparatory peace talks in New York. Since then, and in the face of a worsening of the food situation, international attitudes to further aid appear to have softened.

Germans brace for Hess demos

Agencies

German authorities have banned right-wing demonstrations nationwide this weekend to head off anticipated gatherings on the 10th anniversary of Rudolf Hess' death. Neo-Nazi groups have not announced marches in any specific city in Germany, but the anniversary of Hitler deputy Hess' death on August 17, 1987 is typically marked by right-wing demonstrations. German neo-Nazis were also expected to join a planned demonstration in neighbouring Denmark. Yesterday, German border police prevented two extremists with baseball bats and stun-guns in their trunk from crossing into Denmark. Each of Germany's 16 states, meanwhile, has enacted restrictions on neo-Nazi extremist activities this weekend. The south-eastern state of Baden-Wuerttemberg is requiring 116 known extreme right-wing activists to check in with the authorities throughout the next two days. In Bavaria, a demonstration registered in Wunsiedle, where Hess is buried, has been forbidden. Further east in Thuringen, police arrested two



Right-wing graffiti in Rotterdam, Holland, which says 'Rudolf Hess was murdered 10 years ago' Photograph: Reuters

neo-Nazis on their way to a memorial gathering for Hess in Nuerberg. They also confiscated over 100 extreme-right flags, flyers, CDs and T-shirts. "There is also likely to be one main gathering," Erwin Hetger, head of police in the southern state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, said.

Hess hanged himself with an electric cord in Berlin's Spandau prison on 17 August, 1987, and the date has become a rallying point for the radical right in Germany and other European countries in recent years. Last year German police detained 160 right-wing activists on

the ninth anniversary, while hundreds of neo-Nazis battled with police in Sweden, Norway and Germany's neighbour Denmark, which permits such rallies. In Germany, Hess's anniversary provides the occasion for much public soul-searching about the continued

presence of right-wing thuggery and the appeal of Nazism within a country still acutely aware of its past. The recent surge in joblessness to levels not seen since Hitler's rise to power has, at a time when Germany has seen new waves of immigrants from eastern Europe, this year added to the concern.

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Boy, 14, shoots babysitter then kills himself

Dryden (Reuters) — A 14-year-old American boy apparently shot to death the babysitter he was suspected of abducting. He then killed himself after a car chase near the north-west Ontario town of Dryden, police said on Thursday.

Kimberly Ann Kalinowski, 22, of Livonia, Michigan, and the teenager, whom police did not name, headed north last week after the boy apparently had a fight with his mother, Michigan police said, according to the Canadian Press.

Ms Kalinowski made a phone call from Toledo, Ohio, earlier in the week, but there was no sign of the two until they were seen near Dryden. Dryden police constable Geoff Harley said.

Police chased a car after getting an armed robbery

complaint from a hotel in Wabigoon, south of Dryden. The high-speed chase ended when the car ran into a lamp-post.

Once police reached the car, they found that Ms Kalinowski and the teenager had both been shot in the head.

An autopsy showed that Ms Kalinowski, who was driving, died instantly. The teenager died shortly after the crash in a hospital.

Mr Harley said it appeared the boy shot Ms Kalinowski before turning the gun on himself. A .22-calibre handgun was found in the vehicle, he said.

Michigan police had issued an arrest warrant for the youth on charges he had abducted the sitter.

A place for Elvis among the gods of Olympus

In the *Iliad*, Homer gives us fairly precise directions to Olympus, home of the gods. You take a right past the second cypress on Pilon, skirt Ossa and go straight ahead. You can't miss it. Yet the mountain is not just a place, that's to say a real location with geographical co-ordinates. It also exists "out there" in realms of fantasy and myth and "in here" in popular imagination and private veneration.

Memphis, Tennessee is not so dissimilar. Elvis's Memphis is two places. One is the sweaty Mississippi crossing point you get to on I-40 where you can take the tour bus round Sam Phillips' old studio and all the other places we know from the Presley biography, the Memphis Music Hall of Fame and of course Graceland. But Memphis is also a magical and unspecific site which exists inside the imaginations of the King's millions of followers.

Memphis and Olympus have more in common than that. Elvis would find himself at home among the godly crew who used to hang around Zeus's palace - some of them were pretty big eaters, who wouldn't readily turn down an invitation to an orgy. There were flashy dressers, good lookers and good lovers there too, and songs rising in the air. Elvis has certain of the qualifications generally expected in gods - such as immortal-

ity (at least 30 years' worth of it and the cult looking good for many decades to come) and invisibility (if you don't count the myriad sightings and his two-a-penny impersonators). Transcendental he may not be, but transcendent he certainly is, worshipped across the political and religious boundaries of the world, quite a plus in this age of new fundamentalisms. Of course he is American and represents the mores of one country, just like Coke and the DOS operating system. Elvis, however, is much, much more than a spiritual stormtrooper for American cultural imperialism. Previous world religions have sprung out of some very peculiar places before, like the Arabian desert, the banks of the Ganges and the Judean uplands and we don't talk about Islamic, Hindu or Christian imperialism.

If Elvis hasn't yet accomplished miracles (outside the pages of the *National Inquirer*, at least) he undoubtedly performs many of the functions that in other contexts would be labelled religious, providing succour, inspiration, reassurance, hope, affirmation of life-in-death and a *modus vivendi* for struggling and confused people trying to make it in a difficult world. He may not have been a particularly good man, but he was better than some of the murderers and power-drunk maniacs who have been venerated through the ages.



It won't do to object that a lot of the Elvis cult is mere necrophilia. After all, in most of the world's major religious traditions, sainthood is closely related to the conditions of saintly death. Visit the Basilica in Padua, for example, in order to inspect St Anthony's various internal organs. In a fair number of instances, and not just in Christianity, the saint's life has been a pretty run affair, too. You might call Elvis a kind of inverted Augustine. One started off lean and hungry and got fat later on, the other started off with sex, drugs and the fifth-century equivalent of rock and roll and adopted a lean and hungry look only later; both left behind a set of precepts for living (viz. "wise men say..."). "I don't want a four-leafed clover".

Besides, Elvis wins the dispensation we tend to award artists. It often doesn't so much matter how they lived, how many illegitimate children they had, or how many jelly and peanut butter sandwiches they scoffed because they produced great works. A good and untimely death excuses even more. Elvis Lives! is more than a slogan. It accurately describes the place the iconic Elvis has come to occupy in the collective imagination and countless individual minds.

Does that make him a spiritual figure, in the dictionary definition of "not concerned with external reality, inspired, divine"? It is

hard for some of us to imagine anyone less saintly or less spiritual. Yet we live in strange times. It's not that you cannot tell reason from unreason but that they seem able to co-exist remarkably happily in many confused minds. This week we heard of a celebrated psychic consultation but one only undertaken thanks to a helicopter ride - which illustrates the easy co-habitation of technological rationalism (try building a helicopter without a degree in aerodynamics) and wild, incontrovertible faith.

We would not in all seriousness compare Elvis to a real religious figure, despite the unreasoning devotion he inspires. He never asked for that. He was, in the end, only an entertainer, a singer: we would credit him with the intelligence to be agnostic at the antics of some of his devotees, could he see them now. He offers no serious code to live by or general philosophy. Yet millions will today be making their pilgrimage to Graceland, whether in body or in imagination, to celebrate a long dead rock and roll singer. In the monotheistic world that much of mankind has inhabited during the past couple of millennia, it seems frankly bizarre. But the old polytheists of Greece and Rome, a rather earlier lot, would have understood it all perfectly. In Olympus, they are swaying and chuckling.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We're no underclass - just persecuted for being poor

Sir: My class is as good or bad as yours, or Mr Mandelson's, and "under" neither ("Labour task force to help underclass", 14 August). If I am "socially excluded" it is because I do not have the money to participate in such a society as we still have, which is built upon money and the inequality of its distribution.

I and millions like me - pensioners, disabled, unemployed - do not need clever phrases to disguise us from all but ourselves. We need some relief from persecution by the debt collector and the council bailiff. We need to be lifted out of poverty by a booming economy, and we need the reordering of social priorities, so that real attempts can be made to help us rather than to penalise us for being poor.

Every time a benefit claimant is prosecuted for non-payment of the regressive council tax, a political and social prosecution has taken place. Poverty was made criminal by Thatcherism. Those of us who live with it might begin to regain a little of our lost respect for politicians if they would launch a moral and social crusade against it. A small but important start could be made by instructing local government to take its thieving hands from the pockets of the poorest.

If Mr Blair would like to know how to proceed from there, there are very many of us, currently voiceless, who could advise him very much more effectively than the civil servants and worthy foundations on which he is likely to rely.

ROBERT JONES
Newport,
Isle of Wight

Sir: I agree with Peter Mandelson that to bring the socially excluded into the mainstream of society is the greatest challenge we face. The National Council for Voluntary Youth Services has long argued for greater co-operation between government departments. The youth organisations in our membership, which range from the Boys' Brigade to the YWCA and the Woodcraft Folk, have experience in adopting a co-operative approach locally. Youth work at its best works within the community together with a variety of groups and agencies and provides marginalised young people with opportunities to gain confidence and self-respect. The 500,000 volunteers who deliver the majority of services to young people in England also provide the positive role models that disaffected young people need and quite often do not find within families where no one works and where desperation has led to apathy.

It will be important to listen to those who are socially excluded and to organisations that have experience of working with them. A first step will be to abandon the term "underclass",

which suggests that "the growing number of fellow citizens that lack the means, materially or otherwise, to participate in the economic, social, cultural and political life in Britain today" are not really part of our society. The Government can only succeed in its ambitious aims if it sends out the clear message that the fight against social exclusion is the responsibility of everyone.

Those of us working in the voluntary youth sector look forward to working with the Social Exclusion Unit.

SUSANNE RAUPRICH
Chief Executive
National Council for Voluntary Youth Services
London WC1

Sir: Tony Blair can do much better than simply launching another Cabinet office policy unit this autumn, by following his Irish counterpart and instigating a public debate around the creation of a fully thought-through national anti-poverty strategy. In so doing, he would also honour a commitment made at the 1995 UN World Social Summit in Copenhagen - but not upheld - by the previous government to develop a national poverty eradication plan.

The Irish National Anti Poverty Strategy, launched earlier this year, following 18 months of consultation, addresses the underlying causes of poverty and social exclusion. Crucially, it also sets a measurable and time-bound target for reducing poverty, and recognises the importance of keeping those affected by poverty and the voluntary and community organisations which represent them involved throughout the process.

The UK government cannot hope to make serious inroads into "social exclusion" unless it is prepared to establish structures to include those most directly affected by poverty and social exclusion within the policy-making process. New Labour has not been backward in welcoming the captains of industry into the machinery of government, but has yet to demonstrate a commitment to seek out the opinions of those at the other end of the social scale. Church Action on Poverty and the other 150-odd members of the UK Coalition Against Poverty are therefore looking for some concrete steps towards achieving this, and not just another Downing Street policy announcement this autumn.

NIALL COOPER
National Coordinator
Church Action on Poverty
Manchester

Sir: Tony Blair should be more positive - why not call it the Social Inclusion Unit?

LEN SALEM
London W5

Pupils trained to jump through A-level hoops

Sir: The English A-level and Scottish Higher results this year show yet further improvements in the pass rates. Teachers claim that this is because students are better prepared, while the employers say they see no improvement in the capabilities of prospective employees.

Many years of experience in teaching A-level and Higher Grade subjects lead me to believe that both statements are justified. Students are better prepared and they are no better educated than they were 20 years ago.

Today both teachers and students focus their efforts on finding out what sort of hoops examiners prepare for them, so that they will know how to jump through them. They gear themselves to answering the specific type of question set. Ten years ago some of my students attempted the A-

level mathematics papers I sat in 1968: they failed them abysmally but they all went on to get top grades in their own exams - where the style of question asked was different though the syllabus was identical.

This process is most clearly visible in the preparation for entry to Oxford and Cambridge colleges.

Independent schools and some state schools employ many teacher hours preparing students to jump through Oxbridge hoops. "Success" rates at such schools are notably higher than elsewhere; they know how to work the system. This reflects a high degree of training. It does not necessarily indicate that the student is either better educated or better prepared for university.

FRANCIS ROBERTS
Edinburgh



Lord Rogers' planned glass canopy for the South Bank, with the Royal Festival Hall in its 'valuable and appropriate place' on the right
Photograph: Eamonn O'Mahony/Studioworks

South Bank: centre of a new arts quarter for London

Sir: Robert Maxwell (letter, 13 August) is wrong. Our proposals for the South Bank aim to return the Royal Festival Hall to its former glory in an appropriate and permanently improved setting. It will be the centrepiece of an active open-to-all and diverse arts quarter that will attract three times as many people.

It is also the view shared by Sir Leslie Martin, the architect who so successfully designed the Royal Festival Hall in 1951. Following the international competition for the masterplan in September 1994 a detailed presentation was made to Sir Leslie, after which he gave our scheme his warmest support.

To quote from his letter to Nicholas Snowman, our chief executive: "The Richard Rogers scheme has made it possible to create this... splendid

new centre for the arts... to ensure that the Royal Festival Hall, already a Grade I listed building, will in the future have a valuable and appropriate place in that important development."

Sir BRIAN CORBY
Chairman, South Bank Board
London SE1

Sir: Robert Maxwell's authoritative analysis of the South Bank development scheme may come in time to stop the Arts Council authorising expenditure of lottery funds on a project which is not justified on artistic grounds.

Since it was first constructed, the Royal Festival Hall has had acoustic problems which are insuperable. There is no way, short of a major remodelling, in which changes would

allow the five London orchestras to give of their best. They cannot hear each other; they cannot produce singing tone which allows the music to "float"; the sound can never be dense, and therefore always lacks thrill. Certain frequencies are absorbed by the air when they travel more than fifteen metres; we cannot build on our own sound unless we are surrounded by hard surfaces. The hall is too wide for top-quality sound.

There is no case to spend many millions on a building, when London will still be without a hall which allows its fine orchestras to perform as well as they can in Vienna, Boston or Amsterdam.

DENIS VAUGHAN
Denis Vaughan Acoustical
Consultancy
London WC2

LETTER from THE EDITOR

Question: why am I like Piers Morgan, the affable Editor of the *Mirror* - apart, of course, from the boyish good looks and the fact that Mirror Group is a shareholder of *The Independent*?

The answer this morning is that I too am in subject apology mode. Piers, following a savage denunciation of *The Sun* over its coverage of the Grobbelaar match-fixing charges, then wrote to his rival editor, describing his behaviour as being that of a "total prat", a "complete tosser" and a "juvenile delinquent". *The Sun's* editor, Stuart Higgins, being a man of honour, took the letter of apology in good part - and promptly leaked it.

I am hesitant about describing myself in quite the colourful terms of Morgan's letter - these things have a habit of getting into the cuttings and returning to haunt you - but an apology is certainly in order to Indian readers, above all. Yesterday, on page three, we published a striking picture of a pensive-looking Mohandas Gandhi, "image of sainthood". Except that, on closer inspection, it wasn't Gandhi: it was the actor Ben Kingsley dressed up as Gandhi, a still from the film of the same name. For what it is worth, the mistake happened because when the picture desk typed "Gandhi" into the electronic library Fotoshop, it produced on-screen images from the film as well as original archive material. On screen, no one paused to take a second look. And Kingsley's make-up was good. But we are pleased by our contribution to India's independence celebrations? Not hugely. Sorry 'bout that.

The foreign editor brings in the front page of a Somali paper, *Xorriya*. It means "Independent" and is adorned with an eagle, rather like ours. We seem to have started something. There is the eagle-adorned *Sunday Independent* in South Africa. We have a corporate link to that paper through the *Irish Independent*; but there is also the eagle-adorned *Baltic Independent* and a Korean paper, formed by independent journalists which

has chosen... yes, an eagle for its masthead. It is nice to feel that we are not alone. On the other hand, I suppose the whole point of eagles is that they don't fly in flocks.

Robin Cook's wife Margaret, whom he has left for his secretary after a 28-year marriage, writes in *The Scotsman* of "the overdriven workaholic personality" which is attracted to politics: "The perceived necessity to compete ensures that the individual, once on the conveyor belt, has no rest. Ambition and single-mindedness prevent the leaving effect of leisure and 'time to stand and stare'. Finer feelings and natural emotions become blunted."

Kind colleagues with broad grins have been asking how I enjoyed my rainy holiday - gentle solicitude for others being widespread in this office

This, I have to say, is a description of male lunacy which certain members of the Marr household would say is not limited to male politicians. So I am off on holiday again. Readers may recall Colin Hughes's description to this spot last week of our rain-drenched Devon break. All week kind colleagues have been coming up to me with broad grins asking how I enjoyed myself - gentle solicitude for others being widespread in this office. But the truth was that it was at least as wet as described. Local rivers burst their banks; when we went swimming (undaunted) in the sea, the colour and smell of the area's red clay was thick in the water. The tired phrase "swimming in blood" came suddenly to life. Anyway, we are now off again: knowing our luck, you can expect typhoons shortly in the Bay of Biscay and an earthquake in south-west France.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

With every smell, I smell food. With every sight, I see food. I can almost hear food. I want to spade the whole lot through my mouth at Mach 2. *Basta!* - The Duchess of York, from her holiday diary, published in *The Spectator*

I believe in two men, Elvis and Jesus Christ - Yvonne Marie, on the 20th anniversary of the King's death in Memphis this week. It's a very strong network, no doubt about it. But it's an open, meritocratic clique. The reason that we all get on, to be arrogant about it, is that we're all very clever - Derek Draper, former aide to Peter Mandelson, on the young MPs in the New Labour network. A lot of them are knocked down on roads in places like Ontario - MoD spokesman on the source of bearskins used to make Buzby helmets for the Foot Guard regiment.

We will not be a footnote - we'll be a footprint in the history of rock music - Noel Gallagher, lead singer of Oasis. If Oasis is bigger than God, what does that make us? Bigger than Buddha? Because we are a darn sight bigger than Oasis - Mel C, aka Sporty Spice.

Martin McGuinness is the Godfather of the Godfathers of the IRA - Ken Maginnis, deputy leader, Ulster Unionist Party. I'm 23 years old and I didn't even know my own arse. Now I'd recognise it anywhere - Paula Howarth, *'Penhouse'* model.

Not bragging, but not too old for sex

Sir: Thank you, Anna Raeburn, for pointing out that older people do have, and enjoy, sex ("Just don't say the S-word", 14 August).

Unfortunately the Health Education Authority thinks otherwise. They have just published a report, *Health in England 1996*, in which most of the statistics only cover people up to the age of 74, which is bad enough. But the sections on sex and drugs stop at 54 years. How do they think we spend our retirement? The H.E.A. should further its own education by talking to its old 'uns, who probably are just as sexually active, but spend less time bragging about it.

ANNE PECK
London N7

The rudeness and courtesy of France

Sir: There is a simple explanation for the diverging views of your readers on France as a tourist country.

During the summer season, large numbers of French students obtain jobs as waiters in restaurants, with the intention of cheating customers out of as much money as possible, while amusing themselves by being as rude as possible. Although second to none in my administration for French literature, art and cooking, I have experienced blatant insolence and cheating from those young people.

ANDREW BLUHM
Thames Ditton
Surrey

Sir: I agree entirely with Jose Segal ("Vive la France" - letter, 14 August).

We have owned a house in Normandy since 1980 and find the French very friendly and helpful. There is no graffiti, no noisy neighbours, no drunken hooligans, no cars with music one can hear 200 yards away.

I would advise critics of the French to go further than the Calais hypermarket and the Champs Elysees in Paris.

GORDON NEWMAN
Bechill on Sea,
East Sussex

Is this a record? - not according to the NHS

Sir: Paper records can easily be hidden or lost.

Many GPs, like myself, prefer to keep records as computer files, and all recognised GP clinical software (Surgery Manager, Meditel, EMIS for instance) has for many years retained an audit trail of all alterations to the record, allowing a claim that a record has been expunged to be investigated (and, from the GP's point of view, defended).

However, the Department of Health has for several years dragged its feet over the simple change to the rules from a requirement that

doctors keep "records on the forms provided", to "keep suitable records". The result is that GPs keeping excellent records may be found technically in breach of their conditions of service, and have little protection against arbitrary and potentially large fines.

A parliamentary select committee reported that they expected these minimal changes to be introduced very soon; that was very long ago and among all the other left-over undone jobs in the NHS, the current government should find five minutes to alter that sentence.

Dr ADRIAN MIDDLEY
Chairman Exter Division of the
British Medical Association
Exeter

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the saturday story

Corruption on an Olympian scale



The 1960 Olympic Games in Rome: right, lighting the flame; above, the main stadium
Photographs: AP/Camera Press

Rome wants to host the Olympics in 2004, but, says Andrew Gumbel, such events always turn into orgies of civic embezzlement and inefficiency. It has been that way since Pope Boniface VII introduced Holy Years in 1300



One of the mysteries of the Rome bid is the enthusiastic participation of Mayor Rutelli, an environmentalist with a track record of opposing such large-scale enterprises. In 1992, as a simple member of parliament, he energetically opposed Milan's bid for the 2000 Games on the grounds that it would be "a distortion of planning and investment priorities" for the city, and because public money should not be spent so that private companies can profit from it. He even asked the government to ensure that "no public resources will ever be used for the organisation of any Olympics".

Perhaps the most sympathetic reasoning behind Mr Rutelli's change of heart is the desire to attract money to Rome at any cost. The city is so underdeveloped and decrepit, the argument goes, that without junkets like the millennium Jubilee (a vast programme to modernise infrastructure is envisioned) and the Olympics, it will never enter the 21st century, much less the 20th. OK, so a lot of the money will be squandered and lost, but that is just a risk the city has to take.

Cristiano Brughitta, secretary of the No Committee and author of a pamphlet outlining his organisation's main arguments, listened to this reasoning with bemusement. "That's an incredibly cynical way of thinking," he said. "And besides, only an eighth of the bid money would go to long-term projects. The Italian government would do much better spending the money differently, or even just leaving it in the bank and earning interest."

The argument may yet turn out to be academic. Athens has been making very strong running in the Olympic stakes and, Primo Nebiolo notwithstanding, is deemed to have done a creditable job with the world athletics. Italy's credibility, meanwhile, has been worn down by the University Games, scheduled for 19-31 August in Sicily. Not one of the new building projects promised for the Games has been finished. Seven regional councillors have lost their jobs over the fiasco, and one of them is currently in jail facing corruption charges.

Can Rome still win the nomination? If it does, it will be largely thanks to the smiling face and competent manner of Mr Rutelli, not to mention the heritage of several ancient Roman emperors, Bernini, Caravaggio and Michelangelo. If it does not, the organising committee will no doubt blame Mr Galli della Loggia and the other spoilers, but its failure may well do the long-suffering Eternal City a big favour.

The Romans are distinctly touchy about their bid to host the Olympic Games in 2004. When one newspaper had the temerity a few months ago to start questioning the wisdom of the enterprise in a city drowning in traffic and smog, where infrastructure stinks, the phones are primitive, public transport unspeakable, hotel accommodation miserable and scarce, and where the only room left to build major sporting facilities is in gritty wasteland in the distant suburbs, it suddenly found itself about as popular as a paedophile ring.

The mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli, refused to talk to reporters from the paper, the *Corriere della Sera*, while the senior editorialist and outspoken anti-Olympics agitator, Ernesto Galli della Loggia, was ridiculed in public as an "intellectual snob" and an embarrassment to his country. The authorities hurriedly commissioned opinion polls showing that 76 per cent of Romans were in favour of the games, and presented economic stud-

ies forecasting glorious profit margins and job opportunities if the Olympic bid came off.

As the deadline approaches for the International Olympic Committee to make its final decision – the contest between Rome, Athens, Stockholm, Cape Town and Buenos Aires will be decided on 5 September – the battle between the organisers of Rome's candidacy and those who oppose it is reaching extraordinary heights of bitterness.

Not content to dwell on Rome's shortcomings, Mr Galli della Loggia has decided to take a wholesale swipe at the Olympic movement, describing it as an "extraordinary money-making machine" and denouncing the IOC's president Juan Antonio Samaranch as an unrepentant ex-fascist because of his past as a government minister in Franco's Spain.

In reply, the president of Italy's national Olympic committee, Mario Pescante, has accused Mr Galli della Loggia of jeopardising Rome's candidacy with his ill-considered rhetoric.

This week, the crabby exchanges have spilled over national borders to include

Athens, which has just finished hosting the World Athletics Championships and poses the most serious threat to Rome's Olympic bid. The Italian president of the International Amateur Athletics Federation, Primo Nebiolo, complained that only the intervention of his organisation prevented the event turning into "a tragedy" and that the Greeks were incapable of putting together a major world sports fixture. He and the outspoken Greek Foreign Minister, Theodoros Pangalos, both accused each other of mixing sport and politics for their own ends.

The battle for the 2004 Olympics is thus turning into a passionate Mediterranean soap opera, with all sides denouncing each other for their perfidy and ruthless egoism. Expressing idle opinions about the issue in Rome these days can be distinctly detrimental to one's social standing. Quiz the yes camp about the fine details of the various objections to their scheme and they will dismiss you as a loser all too easily duped by a few bitter Green

Party politicians trying to settle petty scores within their ranks (Mayor Rutelli also being a Green). Suggest to the so-called "No Committee" that the Olympics might have some benefits, such as bringing much-needed investment to a city starved of good government for most of the past 50 years, and they will deafen you with statistics that might be reliable but then again might just be over-earnest propaganda.

At first sight, Rome seems like a magical choice of setting for the Olympics. It has the romance of the ancient ruins, beautiful Baroque churches and meandering cobble-stoned alleyways. It has sunshine, fine parks, Italian stylishness and unforgettable food. It can even boast a successful Olympics, held in 1960. That probably explains why, for much of this year, the city has been the firm favourite among professional Olympics watchers.

But to anyone who lives in Rome, the bid sounds like complete madness. The city is no longer the gentle, provincial capital of 1960, but rather an uncontrollable mess of roads, cars, poorly constructed housing and civic chaos. Mayor Rutelli has been trying to get to grips with the legacy of official corruption and rampant building speculation since taking

over the city government in 1993, but he has barely begun the gargantuan task.

What's more, ever since Pope Boniface VII introduced Holy Years in 1300, Rome has proved itself incapable of organising a major international event without turning the whole thing into an orgy of embezzlement, inefficiency and exploitation of the tax-paying public. The 1990 World Cup, held throughout Italy, left Rome with three unusable train stations and caused a budget overshoot so enormous (up to 300 per cent on some projects in the capital) that magistrates are still sorting out the mess.

One of the men under investigation for the 1990 fiasco is Mr Pescante, head of Italy's national Olympic committee. Another is Franco Carraro, who was mayor of Rome at the time as well as chairman of the World Cup organising committee, and now finds himself in a key role as one of Italy's representatives on the IOC.

Mr Rutelli's entourage argues that times have changed and that the wanton extravagance of the past is no longer tolerable or even possible. But the No Committee sees plenty of potential problems, notably with a brand new rowing basin

being planned for the Magliana area, on the way to the airport, at a cost of 50 billion lire. Not only will the new basin supplant the existing international rowing facility on Lake Piediluco 70 miles north of Rome, but the projected site also just happens to be around the corner from the Holiday Inn hotel, and the Holiday Inn just happens to be owned by Raffaele Rannucci, president of the Rome Olympics organising committee.

It is also unfortunate that Rome is lumbered with a phone system so backward that there is no chance of its hotel rooms being computer-compatible until well after 2004. It currently has bed space for 120,000 visitors, a veritable dearth, especially in high tourist season, and will be hard pressed to get anywhere near the 620,000 beds quoted in the official Olympic literature.

There are other official statistics that appear to stretch truth to its very limits. Rome airport to the city centre in 23 minutes? With Michael Schumacher driving the taxi and a couple of outriders clearing the way, maybe. Around the city ring-road, from the projected Olympic village in the south to the projected main stadium in the north, in no more than half an hour? Only

if the city is deserted, which it certainly won't be if the Olympics come to town.

The Rome bid envisages a spending budget of around 3.5 trillion lire (some £1.5 billion), all of it from the public purse at a time when the government is desperately trying to rein in its budget deficit to qualify for the European single currency. The bid envisages seven new sports stadiums, five in Rome itself and two in Tivoli 20 miles away, and a brand new Olympic village with 15,000 beds.

According to IOC rules, all these facilities have to be adaptable to other uses once the Games are over. The official literature talks of converting the village into student accommodation, even though two out of Rome's three universities have not been consulted about the project, and are unlikely to be interested since the vast bulk of their intake are native Romans who spend their student years living with their families.

The stadiums, meanwhile, are supposed to turn into conference centres and concert halls. The No Committee reckons they will have to stage 14,000 shows every year just to break even – a wonderful idea if it ever happened, but unlikely in a city with the cultural life of a provincial backwater.

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LLOYDS CHEMISTS

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karen krizanovich

Next week I'm going to show you how cool I am. So you have a whole seven days to go out and gawp me. Blind me with fashion. Sideswipe me with a new club. Dazzle me with a new restaurant (as if). Show me that you are so on the cutting edge you have to wear iron underpants.

Think you can beat me, eh? OK, I betcha a monkey that it cannot be done. For starters, do you know which is the hottest new cuisine and where can you find it?

MoMo, you say? Moroccan, you imply? Fish! The latest dining experience is New Indian Cuisine. The best place to find it is at Chor Bizarre, 16 Albemarle Street, London.

Now, I haven't been a huge fan of Indian food ever since I had to throw four attempts at making homemade dahl down the loo. (Women remember humiliations like that.) This food is tasty, deeply flavoured with well balanced spices. I'm told it is low-fat. It had better be. I needed a fork-wallah to finish the trough-sized portions.

Be warned, though. Go to Chor Bizarre wearing good shoes and not one of those micro-minis (unless you're trying to snag a new man). The tables are glass-topped. Secondly, make sure your credit card isn't maxed. The bill? More like a car payment. It was worth it. I've got to feed my instrument somehow.

For those not ready for the new wave of Indian cookery, there is the current fad of Moroccan. This cuisine

isn't new or forcibly trendy, not like that horrific idea of "fusion" cookery, which tried to weld East and West cuisine together.

At MoMo – furnished like the inside of *I Dream of Jeannie's* bottle – cheap and honest Moroccan food goes high-profile. That's OK, I guess, if you're going to get hammered and not really taste anything but a sour stomach afterwards. As an ex-wife who used to cook, I now want to eat at restaurants which serve food I cannot make better or cheaper at home. To emulate the cooking at MoMo, kidnap a Moroccan chappie and give him a wooden spoon and an oil drum. Hey, we could make a mint!

Weird things lurk in innocent places. If you don't believe me, look at a box of Kellogg's Honey Nut Loops.

I just discovered that Honey Nut Loops, a popular breakfast munch packed with sugar and shaped like donut seeds, has been offering a pathetic "injured animal" in every box. By injured creatures and tasty breakfast I don't mean bacon and eggs. You see, in with these Loop-things, there is an oh-so-cute, friendly faced plastic doggie or horrie which purports to teach you how to care for animals.

The lesson begins by dropping the little blighter into ice water. This will make an "injury" appear on the animal. "To make the injury disappear, all you need to do is rub it better!" says the box. Rub

it better? The poor thing spends several weeks inside a dark, dusty, sugary box of cereal. Blinded by glaring daylight and the bad breath of sugar-fed humans, it then gets plunged into freezing water. On the brink of hypothermia and drowning, the puppy or pony now sports a very nasty red mark on its knee, bum or shoulder. While rubbing this blood-soaked area, the perky look of total trust never leaves the beast's face.

I don't know if I'd want my kids (Biff, Cammerbund and Whiffy) to get the idea that rubbing makes things better. Rubbing eyes is right out. Mosquito bites too. As for rubbing other things, this is what public school is for.

Kellogg's should leave baby animals with arterial spray to the professionals. The end result? These boxes of Loops Tooth Decay and Breakfast Cereal have helped Kellogg's – assisted by the BBC's *Animal Hospital* – raise £125,000 for the RSPCA. This is cool. But squeamish Americans that I am, I don't want to be reading the newspaper, chomping through Loops and discovering, too late, a bleeding bound languishing on my spoon.

Kellogg's motto, "If you don't see Kellogg's on the box... it isn't Kellogg's in the box," is a touch deceptive. There isn't just Kellogg's in the box, is there? There are injured pets teetering on the brink of septicæmia. Is this the Nineties version of a nutritious breakfast? What's after brekkie, then? Burning down Battersea Dogs Home? Who knows?

Maybe this is the breakfast of the sickos who are cutting up horses around the country?

The point of mangled dogs at breakfast, I assume, must be much the same as the tamagotchi machines. A huge hit with kids, the tamagotchi toy is born, grows – and dies if you don't look after it properly. Criticised that they teach children about death at too early an age, tamagotchis now have to have other machines to baby-sit them. Kids cry when they die. And they won't accept a new one in its place, not like when you kill the kids' goldfish. Nobody hugs goldfish.

But are bleeding injuries on plastic toys any less traumatic? What happens if I don't rub them? Does their angry mother come in the next box I buy? OK, we'll forgive Kellogg's this time. (I once visited their HQ in Battle Creek, Michigan and they had the audacity to ask my mother to wear a paper hat. It was fun to see her get steamed up about ruining her hair.) The next time Kellogg's and the BBC set out to teach kids something, the lessons shouldn't be *à la* Sam Pekinpa. Otherwise, I could see breakfast conversations degenerating into something like this: "Hey, Billy, would you like some more bleeding kittens on your pancakes?" Well, at least they're eating and talking. These sorts of things bring parents and children together. Isn't that why people make families in the first place? Now, could you pass me the plasters?

كلنا من الواصل

صكزا من الاصل



IMAGE OF THE WEEK

Is it an opera? Is it a ballet? Is it a comedy? Jean-Philippe Rameau's 'Platée' delighted some, disappointed others at Edinburgh. It is certainly dramatic, eye-catching and worthily eccentric in the best tradition of the Festival.
PHOTOGRAPH BY GERAINT LEWIS WITH A NIKON F90X, 80-200mm LENS AT 1/250TH OF A SECOND, F2, ON FUJI FILM



the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 16 AUGUST 1997

'Up Against It', an unfinished screenplay by Sixties playwright Joe Orton, far right, has been adapted for Radio 3 by John Fletcher. It was originally written for The Beatles and is now to star Blu's Damon Albarn, right. Here is an extract.

THE MUNICIPAL PARK - NIGHT

Furtive sounds in the dark. Four men, including Christopher Low and the Mayor, on the footpath beside the Municipal Boating Pond.

Mayor: Pee.
Low: Why do you want us to pee?
1st Old Soldier: Do it, son.
Low: But why?
Mayor: Just pee in the Municipal Boating Pond.

Suppressed laughter from other two.

Low: Why?
1st Old Soldier: Because we tell you to.
2nd Old Soldier: Just for fun.
Mayor: For me, I'm an old soldier.
Low: All right. Just here?
2nd Old Soldier: Right!
1st Old Soldier: Just there!

Sound of pee hitting water. Suppressed giggles.

2nd Soldier: Bingo.
1st Soldier: Bombs away.
Mayor: C'mon, let's go.
1st Soldier: Out of it.

They run off.

WORDS OF THE WEEK

Low: But ... but ... His pee continues to hit the water as a single simple violin string line version of the opening bars of 'Yellow Submarine' - 'In the town where I was born' - is heard.

NARRATOR
Old, quite plummy/theatrical, Michael MacLennan/Dylan Thomas without the Welsh, but not as OTT as Donald Sinden.

The Great City lies asleep. What a panorama spreads out beneath us. (Solo string enters again with soft, gentle version of 'Penny Lane'.) Streets, office towers, church towers, row upon row of mouldering redbrick Victorian terraces crowding down toward the river, the great, thriving docks. Here and there a milkman, a drunk, the occasional thief. But almost everywhere, beneath the stars (Music switches to two or three upthrusting notes of 'I Am The Walrus' - McTurk's music), people sleep.

SMALL BEDROOM

Rowena enters.
Rowena (Thrusting, self-confident, upper-middle class, 25): Ian McTurk - get your clothes off!
McTurk: But I haven't got any on!
Rowena: Sublime serendipity -



Bed springs eternal

neither do I. Quick - on the bed!
McTurk: You can't do this. Bursting into innocent young mens' bedrooms on erection bent.

Rowena: I'm the most modern woman in the world. You don't like it when I straddle you and wave my magnificent manumaries in your face? Ian McTurk, stop beating around the bush and get stuck in.

A yelp from McTurk as she forces the issue.

Narrator: Now, however, like a giant box of kippers strewn across the eastern sky, dawn starts to fill the city with detail and perspective.
Again return of simple, quiet string version of 'Penny Lane' (or possibly 'Eleanor Rigby'). Smoke drifts from chimneys. Ships are coming into port, trains leave for other great cities, buses bring the workers

to their factories and shops. Amid all the bustle, we focus in on one street, a church at the end of it, beside the church a large house standing in an unweeded garden, overgrown laurels and rhododendrons all about. A cat crosses the tiles. ('Let it Be' music starts on fiddle, slow, meant.) We pan down to a little window at the side of the house looking into the hall. Up to us stares the face of a young, earnest girl.

HALLWAY

Patricia: Oh Ian McTurk, I love you, I love you. (She turns to face McTurk. Low Coughs.)
Ian McTurk, Christopher Low, Father Brodie will see you now. He's been wrestling with his conscience all day.
McTurk: Who won?
Patricia: A girl like me can't put a question like that to a priest. Ask him yourselves.



(Going) Come with me, please.

FATHER BRODIE'S STUDY.
Father Brodie sits at his large desk. Beside him are arranged, sitting, Connie Boon and The Mayor, Terrence O'Scannon. Before them are ranged, standing, McTurk and Low.

Brodie: I am Father Brodie, priest of this parish.
Connie: I am Police Superintendent Connie Boon.
Mayor: And I am Terrence O'Scannon, Lord Mayor of this town. I hold fanatical views on drugs, promiscuity, and bubble cars.
All three: We are here to judge you!
Brodie: Defendants may be seated.
McTurk: Thanks.
Low: Cheers.
Brodie: Not on that chair - it has a broken leg.
McTurk: Haven't you sent for a doctor?

Brodie: Doctors can do nothing for it. It has a wooden leg.
McTurk: What about faith healing?

Brodie: To the matter. If this great town in which we were born stands for anything, it stands for the sanctity of womankind ...

Connie: Here, here.

Mayor: Rather.

Brodie: Ian McTurk ... ?

McTurk: Yes?

Brodie: At four am this morning my niece, Miss Rowena Torrence, the most advanced woman in the world, was seen entering your room in an advanced state of nudity.

What is your excuse?

McTurk: She'd come to borrow a cup of sugar.

Connie: The girl's on a diet.

McTurk: I refused to give in to her demands.

Mayor: Was she provocative?

McTurk: Nobody is provocative at four o'clock in the morning.

Brodie: That isn't true. I saw the incident with my own eyes.

(To Connie) Do you confirm that, Police Superintendent?

Connie: Indeed I do, father. I handed you the binoculars with my own hands.

Mayor: And you left the blinds up as well, McTurk. The last indulgence of a sensualist. We were forced to sit there watching your sordid and often dangerously athletic proceedings.

'Up Against It' is on Radio 3 on Sunday 21 September

INSIDE

Bob Guccione talks to Janie Lawrence 3

Sun, sea, sand and Shostakovich 4

Travel & outdoors



Benidorm and beyond 9
Rock around the world: Woodstock revisited, Elvis remembered 10, 11
Dorset delights 13
Gardens 14, 15

PLUS

Games, crossword 2
Arts, reviews 48, 5
Books 6, 7, 8
All consuming 16-17
Motoring 19
Money, property 20-24
TV, radio reviews 25
Today's TV Back page

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Dwarf on ice in lateral lift horror

Chris Maslanka explores the lures and flaws of lateral thinking puzzles

At the height of an otherwise pleasant party a somewhat intoxicated guest – let's dub him Justin Thyme – stumbles into me and regales me with the question: "Can a man living in Oxford be buried in Cambridge?" And then, without waiting for my reply, answers himself: "Course he can't, if he's living, there's no need to bury him." And before I can open my mouth to quibble with this he sets off on a random walk, which convinces me he will return just in time for the end of this article.

I hate lateral puzzles. Don't get me wrong, I don't mean all lateral puzzles, just the clever-clever ones – the smart-ones. You know the sort of thing: "What happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable object?" or, more laterally, try this one:

Puzzle One: Every morning, a man living in a skyscraper takes the lift down to go to work. Every evening he walks back up the stairs. Why?

Hint: Such puzzles tend to involve blocks of ice, one-armed ex-cannibals, dwarfs and people drowning in their own water beds. Here's another:

Puzzle Two: The suicide was hanging dead at the end of a rope in an empty room. The mysterious thing was that although his feet were two metres off the ground, there were no objects in the room for him to have stood on. The only door into the room had been locked from the inside. There was water on the floor. How did it happen?

Answers: The chap in the lift is a dwarf and can't reach the button for the floor he lives on. The suicide had stood on a block of ice, tied the rope around his neck, then jumped off. The ice subsequently melted.

Quibbles: If it's that much trouble, the dwarf would surely get a ground floor flat – or at least ensure that there are sometimes some vertically unchallenged people around to press the lift button for him. What sort of society do these puzzle-setters live in?

And how did that suicide smuggle so much ice up to his room. Quite apart from the question of how he got it under his arm and whether it tickled, a block of ice that size weighs more than a car. Perhaps he drove it up the stairs. Why had he bothered with ice anyway, when a chair wouldn't have melted and made such a mess? Was it so that he could change his mind if he got cold feet?

Let's get one thing straight at the outset: lateral puzzles are nothing new. Ancient texts are riddled with them. There is the question that Samson set the Philistines – "Out of the strong shall come forth sweet" – and the answer which Delilah treacherously passed over to them – "a dead lion in which wild bees had nested".

Then there is the riddle of the Sphinx, which stands up well even today: "What creature moves on all fours in the morning, on two feet at noon and on three toward the setting of the sun?"

The answer is not, of course, sheep living near a nuclear plant, but more enigmatically, a human being.

What is new is not lateral puzzles but the label "lateral", a term coined by Edward de Bono to distinguish the exploratory type of thinking from vertical thinking. There have always been two sorts of thinking. Logicians called them deductive and inductive; psychologists called them convergent and divergent. De Bono, in a deft exercise of new labels for old, renamed them "vertical and lateral thinking".

In deductive, vertical or convergent thinking you apply the rules of logic to the data and deduce conclusions. This is a purely mechanical procedure, in the sense that a machine could do it: nothing new is developed in the process. In a sense the conclusions are implied by the data, they are just not in the most user-friendly form.

In divergent, inductive or lateral thinking, by contrast, we invent, we create, we bask, we end up with more than we started with: the parts are greater than the whole. An apple falls on our head and we dream up the theory of universal gravitation.

In spite of what the trendy re-labelling might suggest, all good puzzles are in fact lateral. A good puzzle requires you to explore and discover for yourself a mode of solution: to invent and manipulate conceptual frameworks. That is why puzzles are such good exercises in learning. They facilitate problem-solving by encouraging mental flexibility. In short, it is precisely the laterality that distinguishes a good puzzle from a mere exercise in logic or rote learning.

But just because all good puzzles are lateral doesn't mean that all lateral puzzles are good. Here's another couple. Judge for yourself whether they are good or bad:

Puzzle Three: A woman was assured by a salesman that the parrot she was buying would repeat any word it heard. A week later, the parrot still hadn't uttered a single word. Given that the salesman had spoken the truth about the parrot's abilities, how did this happen?

Puzzle Four: A man adds

height to the mailbox of his neighbour, who becomes so depressed he attempts suicide. Why?

Answers: The parrot was deaf. The suicidal neighbour was a basketball player whose mailbox difficulties convince him he is shrinking and that he will not be able to do dunk shots any more.

Quibbles: or maybe the parrot's owner was dumb, or the parrot spent all its time listening to instrumental music on its personal stereo.

Smart-ass puzzles don't teach you anything apart from pedantry. You feel no satisfying sugar-rush of recognition when you hit on the solution. If anything you feel cheated. When that happens it's because the setter isn't interested in the puzzle *per se*. He or she is interested in getting one over on you. They take full advantage of ambiguity and using misleading language.

For example:
Q: Why can't you photograph a man with a wooden leg in Wimpole?
A: Because you take photographs with cameras. (groan)

Because right and wrong don't come into it, many riddles of old puzzles are endlessly recycled and re-plagiarised complete with wrong answers.
Q: How far can you go into a wood?
A: Only half way: after that you're coming out again.

Not so, as the illustration verifies. But hush, here comes Justin swaying from side to side, clearly still having difficulty thinking vertically. Now's my chance to set the record straight: to fight fire with fire, to outquibble the quibblers, to outsmart-ass the smart-asses.

Justin: If your peacock lays an egg in your neighbour's garden, is it your property or your neighbour's?

Me: The garden?

Justin: No, the egg. Is it yours or your neighbour's?

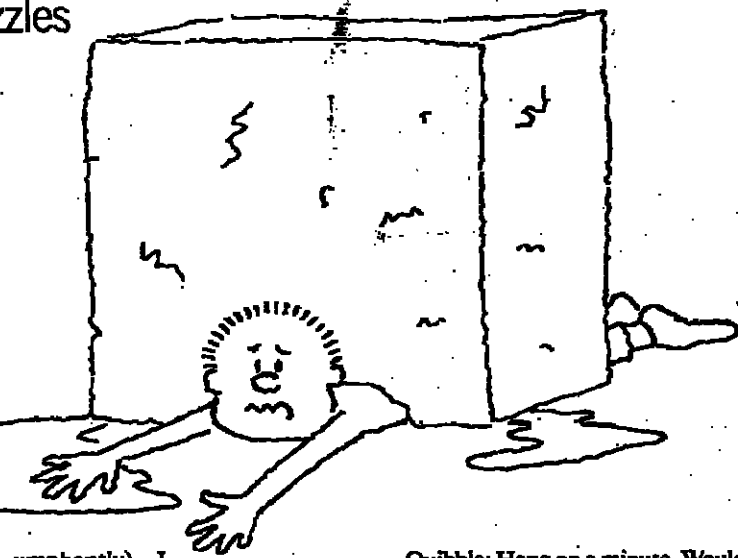
Me: I expect so.

Justin: No, but which?

Me: Mine.

Justin (triumphantly): No, peacocks don't lay eggs!

Me: (slightly more tri-



umphantly) I know. But you said "if".

Justin: Never mind, have a go at this one. A man turns his light out and leaves his house. As a result 60 souls perish. Explain.

Me: Let's see. He's a huge extrovert who compensates for over-eating by carrying his friends around on his shoulders at drunken parties. He turns the light out because he is shy and needs to go to the bathroom sooner than his friends can dismount. In the process he overbalances, toppling all his hangers-on off the balcony into the bay below. Sad really.

Justin (reading from his book): Nope. The answer is that he lives in a lighthouse.
Me: But you said he lives in a house, a lighthouse is a building, not a house. Besides, what's wrong with my answer?

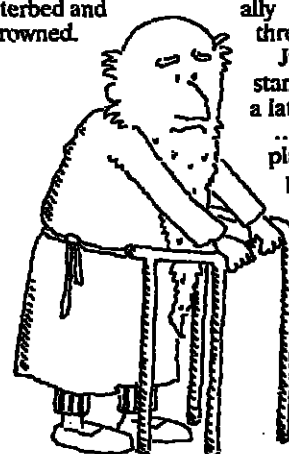
Justin: It's not the answer.

And that's just the point: the authors of such puzzles claim these exercises can liberate your thought processes and make you more creative. So why are they so rigid about their solutions? Isn't a more considered answer to "Can a man living in Oxford be buried in Cambridge?" simply, "Yes, eventually."?

Time for another one:

Puzzle Five: The victim was lying dead on a bed, and on the floor beside the bed was a pair of scissors. The scissors were instrumental in the death, yet there is no trace of blood. There were no cuts or bruises. How could she have been murdered with the pair of scissors?

Answer: The killer had used the scissors to cut open the bed – it was a waterbed and the victim drowned.



Illustrations by
Kate Smiley

Games people play

Pandora Melly talks to a Grand National winner about poohsticks and lost trousers.

Jimmy Frost, 38, National Hunt jockey, winning rider of the 1989 Grand National

There's a game I play with my children. We normally go for a ride on a donkey, down to one of the little bridges over the stream, where we tie the donkey on the hedge and play Pooh-sticks. You drop the sticks in the river on one side, and see who comes under the bridge first. It's the easiest thing to play after you've gone up the road, trying to entertain everybody. I normally end up broke, because even at their age, they race me for money.

Gymkhanas, that's a good game, isn't it? We go at the weekends during the summer holidays. Again, I have to race about a lot. The kids enjoy it as they're all pretty competitive. There's potato races, a sack race and maybe a flag race. It's just a lot of fat dads trying to run like hell with little kids on ponies. You hope your kid doesn't fall off. I can tell you I'm a very bad loser.

There's a serious side to gymkhanas. Children learn to be good losers and winners, and it probably stands them in good stead if they want to take up equestrian riding later in life, so it's a game with a purpose.

I did gymkhanas when I was a kid. I remember a wheelbarrow race. That's when one partner starts on the horse and gallops round, and then you've got yourself a little mate somewhere, waiting to be wheelbarrowed. You have to jump off the horse, pick up your wheelbarrow with the ankles and run. I can remember doing that with a lad a bit younger than me called Andrew Wonnacott. I was pushing him along, and his trousers came off. He was very embarrassed to end up with no trousers, but I wouldn't put him down until I'd won.

The official rules of Pooh-sticks may be found in chapter six, 'In Which Pooh Invents a New Game and Egbert Joins in', of 'The House at Pooh Corner' by A.A. Milne, available in paperback from Mammoth, £5.99, or in 'The World of Pooh' (Methuen, £12.99).

Things people do

Zanussi have been applying their science to discovering what men do in the kitchen. The results of their Zanussi Millennium Man survey have just been published, and reveal that the average adult male spends 41 minutes a day cooking, 18 minutes a day washing the dishes and 32 minutes a day doing the household washing. Despite this domestication, however, they still lead a more reckless life than women, being prepared to eat food that is, on average, 1.9 days past its sell-by date compared with an average 1.6-day tolerance expressed by women. Here are some other findings of interest:

- 8 per cent of men wash their clothes only after they have run out of anything clean to wear
- 9 per cent of men's fridge space in the West Midlands is occupied by beer
- 19 per cent of men admit that they discuss kitchen appliances with friends at the pub
- 28 per cent of men know how to use all the features on their dishwasher
- 38 per cent of men have used the washing machine to clean their training shoes
- 44 per cent of men say that women know most about how kitchen appliances work
- 55 per cent of women say women know most about how kitchen appliances work
- 60 per cent of women believe that women cook better than men
- 61 per cent of men believe that women cook better than men
- 61 per cent of women believe men will be spending more time in the kitchen in five years' time
- 65 per cent of men believe men will be spending more time in the kitchen in five years' time
- 78 per cent of men say they know how to use all the features on their cooker (compared with only 74 per cent who know all the features on the hi-fi)

Survey based on a random sample of 902 over-16s

The games page is edited by William Hartston

Chess William Hartston

One of the less satisfactory features of the Swiss system – where the pairings of each round are drawn up to ensure, as far as possible, that each player meets an opponent on the same score as himself – lies in its great equalising influence. The Smith & Williamson British championship this year has been a good example.

As usual, the early rounds were spent in sorting out the stronger from the weaker players. But once the cream has risen to the top of the tournament table, its representatives have to meet each other, which leads to a large number of draws. And while the cream is churning in this manner, players from the homogenised middle of the table take their chance to win games against lesser mortals and climb back up to positions of contention.

After eight rounds, Kosten, Miles, Adams, Enns, Ledger and Sadler were all within half a point of each other at the top and looking as though they could forget the rest of the field in the race for the title. Paired against each other, however, their games ended in three draws and suddenly the chasing pack was back on their heels.

One of those who took advantage of the slow-moving front-runners in that round was Malcolm Pein, who improved his

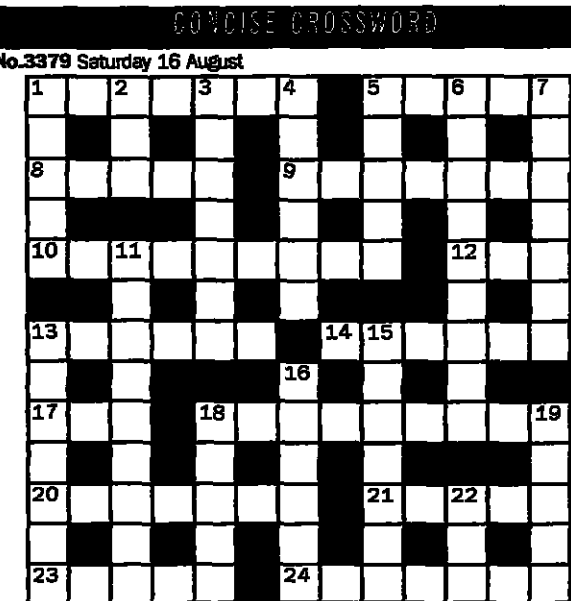
position with a quick win against Stuart Conquest. Finding himself facing his favourite Grünfeld Defence, Pein chose a line that brings White's queen into the game early in order to persuade Black to cede occupation of the centre.

Black's 10...Na5 and 11...c5 (instead of Ne5 and c6) is a highly questionable plan which left the big white pawn centre unchallenged. White increased his advantage with 15.e5! and 17.h5 and after 18.hxg6 Black was lost. If he plays 18...fxg6, then Bg4 and Be6+ is too strong.

White finished the attack neatly with 21.d6. After 21...exd6, White wins with 22.Nd5 followed by f6 and Ne7+. At the end, after 22...Rfe8, almost any combination of Nd5, dxe7, f6 and Qh7+ polishes off matters. Conquest was evident not eager to see precisely which way his opponent was going to deliver the coup de grâce.

White: Malcolm Pein
Black: Stuart Conquest
1 d4 Nf6 12 Be3 Nd7
2 N3 g6 13 f4 a6
3 c4 Bg7 14 h4 b5
4 Nc3 d5 15 e5 c4
5 Qb3 dxc4 16 Qe4 Qc8
6 Qxc4 0-0 17 h5 Ne5
7 e4 Nc6 18 Bxc5 Qxc5
8 Be2 Bg4 19 hxg6 hxg6
9 d5 Bxf3 20 f5 Qb6
10 gxf3 Na5 21 d6 Ne6
11 Qd3 c5 22 Qh4 resigns

Concise crossword



- ACROSS**
- More substantial (7)
 - Ceremonies (5)
 - Offer in excuse (5)
 - Strange (7)
 - Vanish (9)
 - Writing point (3)
 - Cover in bandages (6)
 - Summer month (6)
 - Cereal crop (3)
 - Conduct formal proceedings (9)
 - Flower (7)
 - Recess (5)
 - Teacher (5)
 - Aridity (7)
- DOWN**
- Mechanised cycle (5)
 - Playing card (3)
 - Detailed (2-5)
 - Thief (6)
 - Shaving implement (5)
 - Spider (9)
 - Effervescent drink (7)
 - Declaration (9)
 - Domestic worker (7)
 - Weird (7)
 - Displeased (6)
 - Smell (5)
 - Swords (5)
 - Stick used in billiards (3)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1. Highs, 4. Outlets (Isosceles), 8. Slogans, 9. Alloy, 10. Entail, 11. Shoo, 13. Elae, 15. Scanty, 17. Abides, 20. Node, 22. Pickens, 24. Aural, 26. Sharp, 28. Somnia, 29. George, DOWN: 1. Havers, 2. Groat, 3. Scarlet, 4. Obit, 5. Tlaxa, 6. Edipose, 7. Say-so, 12. Head, 14. Lyant, 16. Acclaim, 18. Bear hug, 19. Silks, 21. Oedema, 22. Poets, 23. Appeal, 25. Ruler.

Bridge Alan Hiron

North-South game; dealer North
North
♠ J 7 3 2
♥ A Q 8 4
♦ K 10 8
♣ 5 3
West
♠ A 8 4
♥ 2
♦ A J 6 5 2
♣ J 9 6 4
East
♠ Q 9 6
♥ 5 3
♦ Q 7
♣ K Q 10 8 7 2
South
♠ K 10 5
♥ K J 10 9 7 6
♦ 9 4 3
♣ A

This deal from the Generali European Championships proved difficult to judge accurately for both sides. After a pass by North, East (with regard to the vulnerability) often opened 3♠. Now 3♥ by South seemed natural enough, when 5♣ by West put North under a lot of pressure. The winning action would be to double (and

collect 300 points) but the four-card support for partner seemed a deterrent to this.

As you can see, 5♥ offered no play, even though it was likely to escape being doubled, but, if he had been allowed to play there, would South have made 4♥?

Presumably, West leads a club and declarer wins, draws trumps and ruffs dummy's remaining club in hand. Then he leads a low diamond, which West must duck, and the king wins. The next diamond lead draws the queen from East, and West must overtake and cash his jack. Now, with the other suits eliminated, West must lead a spade or concede a ruff and discard, after which a winning spade guess by declarer will see him home.

West, of course, must not lead the ♠A, but the ♠A does the trick as long as East contributes his nine. Then, having to play the remaining ♠K 5 facing ♠J 7 3 himself, declarer must lose two tricks in the suit.

Perplexity

Why might UNCLEAN TRIMS and I ERR SLIMY NOSE add up to HE GAVE BY BLIND MAN?

A prize of the Chambers 21st Dictionary will be awarded to the sender of the first correct explanation we open on 28 August.

Answers should be sent to: Perplexity, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

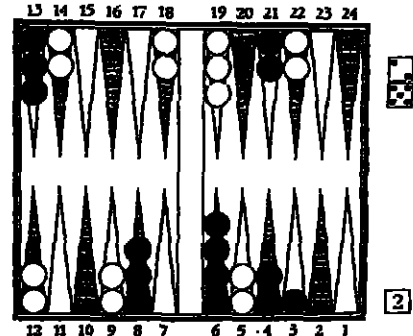
26 July answer: WATSON = 207819 (the only odd-number solution to the problem).

Winner: Peter Claudet (North Walsham, Norfolk)

2 August answers: PSYCHOSIS (chop + sissy) PARANOIA (spian + oar) KLEPTOMANIA (tampon + alike)

Winner: Mrs H.R. McGrattan (Trowbridge)

Backgammon Chris Bray



The week-long extravaganza that is the World Championships has been completed, and this year's champion is the very good Swedish player, Jerry Grandell. The event is held at Loew's Hotel in Monte Carlo; this year the various tournaments attracted more than 400 entrants, 213 of whom competed in the main championship. Former world champions Mike Svoboda and Philip Marmorestein made it to the quarter-finals and semi-finals respectively.

In the final, Grandell was pitted against the French player Frédéric Banjout. The final was to 25 points and when Grandell raced off to a 13-3 lead it looked all over, but then Banjout fought back to trail by only 20-17. Grandell won the next game, to lead 21-17.

In the next game Banjout – as White – doubled far too early, and not long afterwards the above position was reached with Banjout having a 52 to play.

The more one plays backgammon the more one learns that leaving anchors prematurely can be costly. When trailing in the race, as Banjout is here, it is important to keep that last bastion of defence in Black's board, thus making it as difficult as possible for Black to bring home his men. Here White trails in the race by 140-158 and has no earthly reason to run from the 5-point.

The best play is 16/11, 16/14 which clears an unnecessary point at very little risk. However, Banjout made the beginner's play of 20/13 and his punishment was swift and sure. Grandell rolled his very best number, double-3, playing 13/10, 8/5(2)*, 6/3 and very soon afterwards he deservedly won a gammon and the match. This was his second major tournament victory this year, following the Giant Jackpot at the Turkish championships.



Janie Lawrence
talks to
BOB GUCCIONE

A forest of hairs pushes its way through a blouse shirt which, in the manner of Tom Jones, is undone to the navel. Distracting at the best of times, this vision of hairiness seems all the more bizarre as one very earnest Bob Guccione leans forward to outline his views on God. Guccione? Yes, the founder of the sex mag *Penthouse* always intended to be a cleric. "I thought that I really wanted to be a priest but after I went to the seminary, I went through puberty in a resounding way," he explains in a distinctive gravelly voice that's pure Brooklyn. "I decided it was not for me."

From potential priest to promoter of pornography, I imagine that 67-year-old Guccione might well, in that familiar "time is running out" tradition, be cosying up to God once again. As the man who has been dubbed the "King of Porn" makes a surprising detour into things spiritual, the latest issue of *Penthouse*, depicting the cover girl in a pair of stilettoed rubber boots, lies on a nearby table. "No," he says, "now I am a non-believer. I think in time one becomes older, wiser and more circumspect. If there is a God, he must be terribly unjust or work in such mysterious ways as to be totally unfathomable. I cannot accept anything that is so unfathomable."

Bob Guccione came to England in the Fifties, intending to become a painter. Instead, he joined the staff of *London American*, a weekly news magazine. When he decided to launch *Penthouse*, his own magazine, in 1965, the first issue sold out in five days. Over 30 years later, he is a very wealthy man and lives in the largest private house in Manhattan, boasting marble floors and a Roman-style sunken pool. His dress sense is redolent of the more shady characters in *Starsky and Hutch*: cowboy boots, white jeans and a tonnage of chunky gold jewellery. A phalanx of bodyguards is never far away. Today, in the hotel lobby, several men built like tanks are on standby in case I launch a surprise assassination attempt. It happened to that other very public face of porn, Larry Flynt, and they're taking no chances.

Although Guccione insists that *Penthouse* sales in the USA are still healthy, the UK version has not fared well. He has reclaimed the franchise and wants to put *Penthouse* back on track. "It badly needed resuscitation. It became very pornographic and really misogynistic and that was not what *Penthouse* was all about." The man who pioneered public shots is worried about misogyny? Might it not be more to the point to admit that it's been losing pots of money? "I meant resuscitate the image, more than its sales. But that goes with it."

You may be confused to hear this but Guccione doesn't like pornography. Absolutely not. In fact the very word aggravates him. It's all something to do with that fine line between erotica and pornography which he insists isn't really fine at all. "There's a great difference between erotica and pornography," he begins, casually, clearly used to churning out this line of defence. "In my opinion, pornography is a vulgarisation of the art of erotica. So if something is vulgar, it is no longer artistic. When it becomes artless, it becomes pornography. You



The house that Bob built

can photograph a woman completely nude and that can be a work of art - lyrical, beautiful and mystical. As opposed to the very brassy, vulgar image of the girl fully dressed."

Among the changes in the new British *Penthouse* is that the dubiously titled "Pet of the Month" slot has been scrapped. "I am surprised to hear your criticism of that word when you're English," he says, frankly looking nothing like surprised. "When I started *Penthouse*, the term 'pet' was a very affectionate word. If you got on a bus, the conductress came up to you and said, 'One and six, pet'. It was an endearing term and I used it for that purpose. Only when I went abroad did people say to me, 'Pet is really a domestic creature and you're treating women like animals.'"

But then, Guccione sees both the sexes in animalistic terms. He describes his own youthful prowess: "In the past, I would seize almost any opportunity. Like any ordinary young male. The nature of man is not to be monogamous. It is not the nature of any male anywhere in the animal kingdom. He's not intended to be. Nature wants you to go out and replicate yourself. As much as you can, as fast as you can. When you are no longer capable of fulfilling nature's prime directive, life is over."

Guccione's life has been spent fulfilling nature's prime directive in style. When he was 18, he married Lilyann Becker. Three years and one child later, he met British singer, Muriel Hudson. Another four children followed but the marriage floundered when he became involved in setting up *Penthouse*. "I think she felt threatened. She thought that if I worked with pretty girls, I would be taken away and she wouldn't stand for it." Plainly wife number two knew where she would stand in the mating game. "In the very

beginning, you know it was like having your own candy store. Wonderful opportunities presented themselves in a very erotically charged atmosphere. And I guess I took advantage of them. I never bothered to tell my wife. I was very good at sleeping behind her back which is something I did not ultimately respect myself for."

By the time he met his current wife, Kathy Keeton, when he was 55, he had



"sown plenty of wild oats". He recalls that what impressed him most about Keeton, the dancer who had just appeared in the film *The Spy who Came in from the Cold*, was her choice of reading material. "I thought, 'What an incredible woman. She reads *The Financial Times* and books like *African Genesis*.' She had a real feeling for business."

He asked her to come and work for him and proudly announces that she was the "first woman in the Western world" to sell advertising space. However, he still had some "wild oats" to use up. "I said, 'Kathy, from time to time, I'm gonna wander and you're not. I know that's wrong. I know that it's chauvinistic but that's the way I feel.' Breaking with tradition, he made a point of keeping her abreast of every such occasion. "I was very sincere and I always went back

and told her. I'd say, look I was in Barbados or Paris shooting a girl and the second or third day I made love to her. I always admitted to her whatever I did. I never wanted her to hear it from anyone else. I think she understood it was a real demonstration of respect for her - true love. It's very easy for a man not to have to say anything. To keep it to himself or tell his buddies about it. But I never had buddies. My wife is my best friend."

Sounds like a Catholic man's need for absolute devotion to me. "Guilty? I never felt guilty about it. Maybe if I had felt guilty, I wouldn't have said anything about it." Perhaps she would have preferred it if he'd simply kept his flies zipped up? "Kathy's very sophisticated. She realises that these things are going to happen." Naturally, though, what has been sauce for the goose would not have been appropriate for the gander. He is momentarily puzzled I even ask. "Kathy has never had any interest in going with another man. I would not have accepted it. She has been completely faithful to me. Really that's one of the reasons I've been so much more monogamous with her than anyone else in the past." At his age, he can't have any oats left. Would he stray again? "There would have to be some very big reason. I'm really very happily married."

Both he and Keeton work for *Penthouse*. He is as involved with the US magazine now as he was 30 years ago. "There are certain aspects of the magazine that I keep entirely to myself. All the girls are chosen by me and I choose the pictures. I design the layout each month and all the definitive detail. The things I do with the magazine I cannot allow anyone else to do because nobody would do it as well." I wonder how he has been affected by political correctness. "It's absolutely

collapsing in the US. It was very much a thing of the moment, a fashion. Like all fashions, it goes in time." He categorically denies the often touted view of the link between violence towards women and pornographic pictures. "Censorship promotes violence," he counters. He goes on auto-pilot: "People who are sexually satisfied don't go out and commit violent anti-social acts. It's those people that are prohibited from acting out their sexual fantasies that begin to lose the line between reality and fantasy."

Two years ago, Keeton was diagnosed as having breast cancer. "We were floored. She thought it was an ulcer because she began to experience a pain in her stomach. But she had it in her liver, her stomach and lymph nodes. She was given three, maybe six weeks at the outside." Against all the odds, he says that she is now in full remission. She refused chemotherapy and they are now both active in promoting the alternative therapy they believe is responsible. Referring to the pharmaceuticals industry, it's the one time he becomes genuinely heated. "It's the two billion dollar scam - they don't like the fact there is a genuine treatment for cancer which costs as little as three dollars a day." He's taken up the issue in the *American Penthouse*.

Along with Keeton, three of the Guccione progeny also work for *Penthouse*. He is no longer on speaking terms with his son from his second marriage, Bob Jr. Allegedly they fell out in 1988 when Bob Jr. borrowed money to launch his own music magazine, *Spin*, and a year later daddy demanded it back. It must sting as it's the only question he blanks immediately. "Neither of us talk about it," he says dismissively.

Has he contemplated retiring and handing over the reins to a younger Guccione? "So long as I own the company, I have to keep doing what I do. There's still a few things I want to do. When I've accomplished those and got other things off the ground thereafter, in all practical terms, I can retire." With plans for a casino in Atlantic City and his own TV network that could be some time yet.

After a break of 30 years, he's finally returned to painting. Now he usually paints at three in the morning after he's finished working on the magazine. He's already had several one-man exhibitions and says that if he does retire, he would spend all his time painting. "I don't feel now that I have to prove anything to myself or to anyone else. I feel pretty good about life." As the man himself might say: good on you, pet.

Porn merchant: Bob Guccione (above), as he is today, a vision of hairiness and (left), in the early, randy mag trade days

Main photo: Nicola Kurtz

Politics: it's no laughing matter

The apocryphal story of the actor on his deathbed has his friends asking him how it feels to die. "It's hard," he wheezed, "but comedy's harder." Political comedy, it seems, is harder still. I've spent a week ploughing through the stand-up comedy on the Edinburgh fringe, and there was barely a political joke in sight.

The sharp young comedian Boothby Graffoe had a go, deciding that Scottish voters getting rid of the Tories "was not devolution but evolution". But where were the anti-government jokes? Not a titter about Robin Cook's dalliance, though I recall that in 1992 you couldn't go into a bar at the festival without hearing the latest David Mellor joke.

"The Tories were simply funnier," says comedy impresario Bill Burdett-Coutts. Nica Burns, who runs the Ferrier Comedy Awards, has an even more curious rationale: "Tony Blair is handsome, charming and clever. That's just not funny."

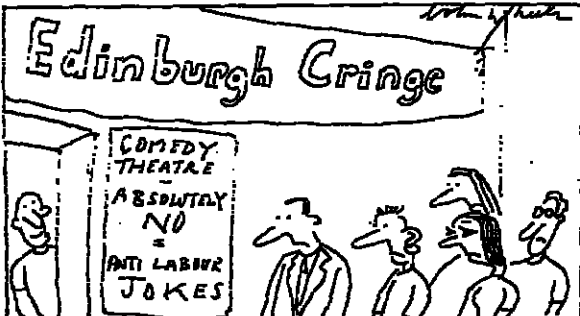
You can't make jokes about good-looking blokes. Is that really the new credo of comic correctness? Eighteen years of Conservative rule have evidently party-politicised and consequently neutralised the nation's comics.



DAVID LISTER
arts notebook

Satire should be even-handed. The Sixties satirists certainly did not shut up shop when Harold Wilson took over from Alex Douglas-Home. Comedy admittedly plays a very small part in the democratic process but it does have a part to play. Yet 220 comedy acts in Edinburgh playing to thousands of students were unable to make a single joke about tuition fees. They should be drummed out of the comics' union.

One person said to be privately appalled at management shenanigans at the Royal Opera House is Sir John Tooley, who was general director a decade ago. His views could soon be public. I hear he has signed a contract



with Faber and Faber to publish his memoirs next year, getting in a year before his successor Jeremy Isaacs publishes his.

Enid Blyton's Noddy is to star in a series on American television for the first time. He will have an American accent, and Big Ears will become White Beard as America cannot have an animated character who is "aurally challenged". All of which is defended by Enid Blyton's daughter, though the old girl herself must be turning in her grave. And that's only the two main characters. Gollywog, I suspect, will be taking the first train out of Toytown, Tessie Bear will no doubt become a feisty post-fem-

inist, and if having large ears is ruled out of order, heaven help the Wobbly Man.

Back in Edinburgh, one play chilled the heart, not so much for its content but for its history. *The Suicide* by Nikolai Erdman was a 1928 comedy satirising Soviet life through the eyes of an unemployed man. After 18 months of rehearsal it was banned as a play that "calamised Soviet reality".

Stalin himself wrote to the producers: "I do not have a very high opinion of *The Suicide*. My closest comrades consider it empty and even harmful. I am not against the theatre experimenting and showing its skill. Provided that the theatre achieves its aims... Comrades will judge who know about artistic matters. I am a dilettante on this."

Some dilettante! The ban on the play led to it not being performed for 50 years. Erdman never wrote another play and is thought to have lived many years in poverty. The producer Meyerhold was eventually arrested, tortured and executed.

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arts & books

Secrets and psychology of the freemasons.....6
Scotland and its new writers7
Choice: rural rides8

Daytona beachwear: T-shirt, baseball cap and black tie. Malcolm Hayes joins the LSO at the seaside

"You going to the Symphony?" The voice behind me on Daytona Beach's North Atlantic Avenue had the genial massive-ness of Paul Robeson's. So did the build of its possessor, who was clad in regulation beach outfit of floppy T-shirt and even floppier shorts, plus socks, trainers, and the obligatory reversed baseball cap. Since I was wearing a smartish suit in the 90F heat of a Florida evening, he'd rightly guessed that I wasn't heading for the beach myself. Yes, I said, I was going along to hear the London Symphony Orchestra playing one of its Florida International Festival concerts at the local Peabody Auditorium. This was given the authentic seal of approval: "Have a good evening."

I did. And that was very much the mood around me, both on the streets and at the top of the high-rises. Everyone I met during my four-day visit to Daytona seemed to like the fact that the festival itself was there and happening, even if they probably had no intention of going along to it.

Daytona Beach is known above all for two things. There's the beach itself: 23 continuous miles of pale sand, running with arrow-like straightness along the Atlantic coast from north to south. Sir Malcolm Campbell came here in the 1930s to break the land speed record in his Bluebird V. The car itself, beautifully restored, is on permanent display at Daytona's other famous landmark, the Speedway – one of the world's great motor-racing circuits, and something of a shrine to car enthusiasts generally and to Ferrari fanatics (I plead guilty) in particular.

Meanwhile, the LSO's regular presence at the biennial Florida Festival is a major component in Daytona Beach's determined campaign to be known for something else besides sun, sand and racing cars. Kent Nagano, the London orchestra's US-born associate principal guest conductor, filled in some of the background for me.

"What has to be remembered is the sheer size of the landmass here. Outside the big conurbations, most of America consists of quite small towns with huge distances between them. I was brought up in California, and my parents used to drive for three and a half hours and back again to take me to hear the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. From somewhere like Daytona you have to go even further. Most people just aren't able to do that."

"That's one reason why the LSO's presence here is a major event. Another is its involvement in the educational side of the festival. In the Seventies America changed its priorities about these things. Mine was about the last generation that grew up with regular exposure to art as part of education. Now, on the whole, that's just... gone."



'Let's be honest, it's different from playing on a wet November evening at the Barbican,' admits one LSO member after yet another post-concert party

PHOTO: ROGER SIMMS

Sun, sea... and symphonies

Sounds alarmingly like home, I suggested. "It's worse here. The festival is trying to do what it can to restore that exposure. It's a commitment that's not to be underestimated. And the fact that there's a regular link with European culture, through a European orchestra, says a lot about the community."

The ongoing love affair between Daytona and the LSO began in 1966 when the festival started up as the brainchild of Tippen Davidson, proprietor of the local *News-Journal* newspaper and toughly dedicated arts enthusiast. The LSO came then, and has been invited back ever since. It has now played more concerts in Daytona than anywhere else outside London and, given the affection so warmly shown to it, has no intention of stopping. No nonsense about arriving at the airport and routinely piling into coaches, for instance. This year, as usual, the players were driven through the town in a 30-strong motorcade complete with motorcycle escort. "Let's be honest," a happy-looking LSO member admitted to me at yet another post-concert party laid on by their tirelessly hospitable hosts. "It's different from playing on a wet November evening at the Barbican."

The climate and setting may be gorgeous, but the orchestra does a lot more than play volleyball on the beach. This year's schedule of seven concerts in 10 days, plus a substantial crop of chamber concerts and educational work, saw to that. An afternoon "mini concert" in a local church beside the Halifax River featured the exotically named Deutz Trio – aka Paul Edmund-Davies, Roy Carter and John Alley, the LSO's co-principal flute and oboe and principal piano. Delivering their choice of music (Quartz, Köhler, Chaminade, etc) with unperfunctory expertise, they also had their audience eating out of their hands as they chatted between numbers, with Alley reminiscing about his erstwhile organ teacher's position at a London crematorium ("It's actually quite a well-paid job. And there's always work"). Robert Bourton's talk before one of the LSO's evening concerts switched deftly between demonstrating the technical intricacies of his bassoon and telling stories, including the best Beecham one I've yet heard. (Sorry, but it would take too long to tell here.)

For the Youth Concert, the 2,500-seat Peabody Auditorium was packed. On the platform was the LSO and, playing alongside the section principals,

young instrumentalists picked from schools and colleges all over Florida. The LSO's "music animator" Richard McNicol, changing gear fluently between competing and conducting, secured a neat performance of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* (pantomime hisses for the LSO's unfazed trio of horns representing the Wolf; fervent applause for everyone else). His younger-than-average audience was having a fine day out, of course. Were they also listening? Judging from those immediately around me, I think they really were.

Enter at this point legendary cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, to conduct the festival's two closing concerts. ("That man never seems to need to sleep," says an LSO violinist in affectionate despair.) Just off a transatlantic flight that had been followed by two three-hour orchestra rehearsals on the trot, the 70-year-old Rostropovich really did look as fresh as a daisy while we talked about life, art and his choice of programmes. Of Tchaikovsky's and Shostakovich's Fifth Symphonies: "Maybe in London or Paris now I would not do these ones. But here, many people will be hearing them for the first time. They're a good place to start." Of Rodion

Shostakovich's Fifth, to which the LSO responded with playing of lustrous power and, in the slow movement, pin-dropping quietness and beauty – all much enhanced by the Peabody Auditorium's full and clear acoustics, which allowed the Symphony's final peroration to thunder with an immensity that thrilled. The young lady sitting next to me – tall, statuesque, and with boundless warmth towards everything and everyone around her – interrupted her passionate applause to stretch out before her a brown arm of seemingly endless length. "Wow! That was wonderful. Look at my arm." (I did.) "It's got goosebumps along it." Russia had indeed spoken to America, through an English orchestra that's currently on exceptional form. I'm glad I was there to hear it happen.

Sir Georg Solti conducts the LSO in Verdi's *Requiem* at the Proms on Friday 12 Sept. 7.30pm, Royal Albert Hall (booking: 0171-589 8212) and live on Radio 3. Sir Colin Davis conducts Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* (soloist: Midori) and Walton's *First Symphony* at the opening of the LSO's 1997/98 Barbican season on 23.24 Sept (booking: 0171-638 8891)

It's like dancing on Eire

Siobhan Dolan discovers why so many get a kick out of copying *Riverdance*

Dancing cheek to cheek is not an image readily associated with Irish dancing, but so huge was the turn-out at the South Bank's recent *Down by the Riverdance* day that by the end of the stepdance class for beginners, most participants had, in trying to master the devilishly tricky footwork, knocked heads with the novice next to them. Still, unlike most other dance lessons, the pain did not extend to an elbow in the face: this was Irish dancing in its most formal sense, so any arm movement was strictly verboten.

The event, part of the SBC's Blitz festival, which runs until Sunday, featured workshops and performances celebrating both the established and more progressive strands of Irish dancing. An estimated 1,000 enthusiasts attended, many from overseas – including visitors from Slovakia, France and Spain – as well, of course, as a substantial Irish contingent.

Yet, until recently, the organisers of Blitz would probably not even have considered putting on such a day, let alone imagined that it could prove such a crowd-puller. Irish dance used to have a serious image problem. Expressionless, humourless, sexless – it scored perfect sixes on every count.

But that was before *Riverdance*. Amid all the *tilt points* and cheesy beats of the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest, something much more significant launched itself before a global audience of 300 million. When the lord of the dance himself, Michael Flatley, exploded on to the stage, arms flailing, it was as momentous

in its own way as William Webb Ellis's decision to pick up the ball and run. Three years later, the beat goes on, and despite the widely reported rift between Flatley and his co-revivalists, both traditionalists and modernisers in the industry continue to bask in *Riverdance*'s glow. Moira Clerkin, organiser of *Down by the Riverdance* and co-founder of Clerkin-works, has no doubt about *Riverdance*'s impact on public perceptions. "It has had great influence in terms of profile," she says. "People now know how skillful our dancing is and don't think of it as some fringe, folk, weird, backward thing. The Irish dancing world hadn't been prepared to step out and look at itself until, it has to be said, Michael Flatley and Moya Doherty saw its theatrical potential and realised it could go on a world stage."

For Linda Fryday, who runs dance schools in Dartford and south-east London, *Riverdance* has opened up new doors for her pupils. "Before, Irish dancing came to a standstill when the girls got to about 17 – they either gave it up or became teachers. Now there's such a great demand from follow-ups to *Riverdance* that they can work towards auditions. It's wonderful." John Brooks is also a teacher, as well as a competition judge. His son Claran is currently touring with *Riverdance*. Brooks reports a surge of interest in Irish dancing from people of all ages. "I get hundreds of phone calls, in particular wanting to know where there are adult classes," he says. "Certainly, every teacher I know is getting a lot more enquiries. As well as encouraging a lot of young people to start, *Riverdance* has also brought people back in who drifted away when they were 12 and 13."

Brooks confirms the knock-on effect *Riverdance* has had in improving standards in the traditional competitions. More participants means more rigorous standards and higher quality. "These days, dancers competing at open level have to be very fit," Brooks says. "They have to put more in – give up their football, for example – if they want to take it seriously." While acknowledging *Riverdance*'s role in making Irish dancing more palatable, Clerkin emphasises that its success owed a lot to numerous other professionals who had been strengthening and developing the tradition for some time. "I have to say that others of us saw the potential years ago but unfortunately didn't have the necessary money or the glitz," Clerkin says. "We've got such a firm basis with the discipline and what can be done with it that it cries out for elements of it to be played about with in a theatrical way. Irish dancing has always had people prepared to do something different with it – to move the upper half of the body, for example, and to experiment with other types of dance. Some might say that stops us being different but I think we can be confident enough of its beauty and skill not to worry that it will get diluted."



Fancy some footwork? Get jigging the 'Riverdance' way

REX

As the South Bank's workshop proved, it's not just those of Irish extraction who have been persuaded to take it up. June Armstrong, who lives in London but is from Barbados, was an instant convert in 1994. "I was mesmerised by *Riverdance*. The music really gets to you and I love the rhythms. The hardest thing for me is the discipline, keeping my hands by my side. We, as West Indians, like to move them and stamp our feet." Her whole family, which also includes a large Asian element, is similarly enthusiastic. "At Christmas, we all put *Riverdance* on, stand in front of the television and practise our moves."

Clerkin believes that the fact that Irish dancing is so rigidly different to other dance forms is integral to its popularity. "You've got dancers who are able to leap through the air and do amazingly dextrous things with their feet with not so much as a flicker of a muscle in the upper half of the body – the result is a unique dance form which everyone wants to come and look at."

The synchronised tapping of the feet on a vast scale has also captured audiences' imaginations. "Irish dancing adapts itself very well to tricky Balkan rhythms," Clerkin explains. "5/8 and 7/8, for example. It gets your head in a spin, as we're used to 4/4 and 6/8, but this, combined with the intricate footwork, is what makes the experience so exciting."

Perhaps the most significant change wrought by Flatley, Butler and company was a much-needed injection of sex appeal. Clerkin agrees: "When you look at the traditional costumes, masses of

green velvet and embroidery, they're absolutely appalling to move in – it's like dancing under a pair of curtains," she says. "Suddenly, we've got shoulderless, backless, low-cut mini-dresses and long black legs. Of course it's sexy." She also points to the Mr Darcy effect: in her eyes, mean and moody also draws audiences in. "There is something very seductive about dancers with totally expressionless faces, while all this power is going through their feet."

Irish dancing may be at an all-time high but Clerkin is convinced that it will continue to get stronger through embracing elements from other cultures. "Look at how Irish music has developed with other world music," she says. "That's not to say that there's no room for tradition – there's room for both. But, ironically, by experimenting with new things, it makes audiences all the more interested in going back and seeing where it started and what it's all about."

But forget the sell-out world tours of *Riverdance*, the spoofs on *Comic Relief* and Guinness's decision to use Irish dancing in its £4m advertising campaign for Harp. What more evidence do you need than the fact that, for the first time in Blitz's 12-year history, Peggy Spencer's ballroom dancing day has been topped from its position as the No 1 crowd-puller. Thanks to *Down by the Riverdance*, even Peggy's been tangoed.

Blitz is at the Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, London SE1 (0171-960 4242) today and tomorrow

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REVIEWS

Seeing is disbelieving

THEATRE *Blinded by Love*
Edinburgh International Conference Centre

Blinded by Love is like a berserk collaboration between Pedro Almodóvar and Luigi Pirandello. Performed with rapacious zest by the Catalan company, La Cubana, the show sends the conventions of theatre and of film on a sublimely idiotic yet thought-provoking collision course. Seeing is disbelieving here as these different worlds literally interpenetrate.

Before you get to the auditorium, you're shepherded by bossy joke-officials through an exhibition which suggests that Catalan culture was dreamt up by some maniacally Catholic Julian Clary. Things are no less camp inside, as you settle down to watch a movie teeming with day-glo-coloured human caricatures and full of naff Sixties-style song and dance about a 17-year-old orphan girl on a trip to Barcelona.

Her blonde coiffure would win her medals at Cruft's but the features underneath are strangely wizened. That this cutesy dolly-bird is being played by Estrellita, a 50-year-old former child star (splendidly played, in turn, by Anna Barrachina), is not the only thing that is exposed when the actress huffily brings the film to a halt over a messy script change involving pigeon shit. To the idea that this is a film about

the troubled making of a movie, there's a further twist here in the brilliantly handled pretence that the movie is still being made as we watch and that we, the theatre audience, can help or hinder its completion.

In the row in front of me, a woman resembling some hot-blooded Hispanic Mrs Merton started loudly accusing her male neighbour of touching her up. Wherever the aggressive, torch-wielding ushers re-seated her, the complaint was the same. Already faced with the terrible problem of how to placate Estrellita (newly discovered to be pregnant), the flamboyantly gay director and the seedy old producer peer out in giant close-up beseeching the disruptive audience not to make things worse.

Finally, the director's domineering mother is driven to bursting through the screen, bustling up the aisle and sweeping "Mrs Merton" back up into the film where, of course, she serenely persists in handbagging supposed molesters. This launches the show's anarchic and technically breathtaking traffic between the worlds of two and three dimensions, and of "then" and "now". The joins are seamless as the characters blithely disregard all forms of border control and - playing around with notions of theatrical

"presence" and movie "magic" - alternate between celluloid and cellular existence.

The film at one point even catches fire and the performers are all ejected through the screen into the theatre like variations on the metaphysically lost characters of Pirandello - in search of a movie rather than an author. Dazzlingly directed and conceived by Jordi Milan, the show is too high-spirited and daft to dwell on its philosophical implications, though its sufficiently humourless PhD student could have a field day with it.

Warned of its unnervingly participatory nature, I'd thought of looking up the Catalan for "Forgive me, I'm severely disabled". But I don't think that would have stopped them, especially as both the live and the film strands climax on a kitschily Catholic miracle curing Estrellita's blindness and on a swaying pop song procession to the Virgin that Fellini himself might have found a tad over the top.

If you fancy clambering into ecclesiastical drag as a candle-waving penitent in a costume that marries Ronald Firbank and the Ku-Klux-Klan, this is just the show for you.

To 23 Aug (exc Mon 18). 8pm. Booking: 0131-473 2000

Paul Taylor

Rich Hall: Too hot for Bedouins to handle



EDINBURGH
FESTIVAL
97
DIARY

The first thing I noticed about Edinburgh this year, as I stepped out of the train station into the streets, was how subdued it seemed. Gone were the skanky, effervescent uni-students, hawking their leaflets. Gone were the stilt-men, guitar-bashers, mudmen, troglodyte dance troupes and other peripheral Fringe street detritus. Gone was the Scott Memorial, the Castle, Arthur's Seat. I looked down at the banks of the lazy Tyne, and realised I'd gotten off at Newcastle.

I cajoled a lift from a donkey wagon and driver and we took the old coal route from Newcastle to Edinburgh via Jedburgh. The Cheviot Hills are gorgeous this time of year,

covered in brilliant displays of poverty, listlessness and bad TV reception. Jedburgh is near where the river Tweed meets up with the Corduroy and Velour rivers and life is hard there because the rivers clash so badly.

We pulled into Nazareth feeling about half-past dead. I said to someone, "Mister, can you find me a place to lay my head?" but in truth I was just retreading the lyrics to an old song by The Band, so we pushed on for Edinburgh.

We reached it late that night and I don't really need to describe the streets to you (see paragraph one).

Edinburgh is a city full of mirth. Edinburgh is a city full of mayhem. Edinburgh is a city full of every comedian on earth. They throw up on you at 3am.

Edinburgh is a city that sings - of ceilidhs and bagpipes and beer. Edinburgh lets England pull its strings - but it won't by this time next year!

At present Edinburgh is in a trenchant frame of mind. The three-week festival is its superficial "party" face, but underneath something seismic is taking place. Edinburgh has more control over the governing of its festival than of its own affairs. This is changing. Scotland will soon

be its own landlord, if you will. Which only makes sense.

Personally, I look at the whole deal this way. Scotland and England are like two sides of a semi-detached house (with Wales in the basement, screaming "More heat!"). They are neighbours. They have to get on. Both secretly think the other is having a better time. England has more parties but they usually end at 11pm. Scotland's parties are fewer but go on all night. Also the liquor is better. There. That explains it, and feel free to call me anytime you need an incredibly complex intranational problem reduced to a cartoon explanation.

My show is called *Louisiana Hayride* and is performed in a room so hot Bedouins are walking out midway through. I come on-stage every night and, within five minutes, I'm sweating like a one-legged man in an arse-kicking contest. Why people pay to see a civilised man perspire to the point of losing his ocular fluid is beyond me but, God bless 'em, they do. It's why I love Edinburgh. It keeps you humble.

Rich Hall's 'Louisiana Hayride' is at the Gilded Balloon (venue 38), 233 Cowgate, to 30 Aug (exc 24). Booking: 0131-226 2151



Captivating canvas: John Singer Sargent's 'Lady Agnew of Lochnaw', 1892

Lady fortune

ART The Portrait of a Lady National Gallery of Scotland

Portraiture is well served by the National Galleries of Scotland at this year's Edinburgh Festival. There is the triumphant Raeburn exhibition staged by the Portrait Gallery at the Royal Scottish Academy, "The Face of Denmark" at the Portrait Gallery itself and, at the National Gallery on the Mound, an exhibition built around a single picture - John Singer Sargent's portrait of Gertrude, Lady Agnew of Lochnaw.

"The Portrait of a Lady", as they've called it with a nod to Sargent's friend and fellow expatriate American Henry James, is a biographical exhibition twice over. It presents, in miniature, the story of Sargent's career and of the subject whose celebrated beauty catapulted them both into the public eye when her portrait was first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1893.

Sargent's name was already known by then. His smouldering, snooty portrait of *Madame Gautreaux* had shocked Paris society nearly 10 years earlier, and his masterly marriage of Impressionism and Pre-Raphaelitism, *Carnation Lily Lily Rose*, had been bought for the British nation as early as 1887. It was, however, *Lady Agnew* that established his credentials as the painter of Edwardian society and brought queues of London's most fashionable to his studio door.

It is a remarkable picture: faultlessly beautiful and perfectly painted. She sits, slightly slumped in a *berçère*, one arm trailing down its side. Her white gown and purple sash, the Chinese hanging behind her head and the loosely brushed flowers that decorate the chair are all painted with matchless virtuosity. Like most of Sargent's

best work, the Agnew portrait is most exciting at its edges, the freer and bolder the better, but, unusually for him, this picture has an added quality that marks it apart. There is, in her look, a hint of psychological tension, as if she may actually be thinking about something other than being painted. It may have helped that she was ill at the time; a little distracted perhaps, but the effect is a far more serious picture than those that surround it.

There are 23 other works by Sargent in the exhibition and a number by his contemporaries, but there is nothing in any of them that comes close to the brilliance of *Lady Agnew*. Remarkable as it is, I'm not sure that it justifies an exhibition to itself: for all of the gilded glamour that fills these canvases, the experience of the show doesn't add up to very much. The paintings, like some of the people they depict, seem too much like the triumph of style over content.

Late in his career, having turned from portraiture to landscape, fed up with what he perceived as the vacuity of his former profession, Sargent said that "a portrait is a picture in which there is something wrong with the mouth". Step next door to the Raeburn exhibition at the RSA and you'll realise that, in other hands, and at other times, the art of portraiture offers other, more satisfying alternatives.

The Portrait of a Lady: Sargent and Lady Agnew' to 19 October (0131-624 6200)

Richard Ingleby

Guitars from Mars

POP Matthew Sweet
LA2, London

By rights, the power-pop merchant Matthew Sweet should need no introduction. Since his breakthrough 1991 album *Girlfriend*, the nectarous-voiced Nebraskan has been spilling out beautifully balanced melodies punctuated with dynamic guitars that form an unmistakable sound (though the spirit of Chilton, Lennon, Parsons and Brian Wilson are handy reference points for the uninitiated).

Back in the States, his albums turn gold and, wherever he plays, there is a "Full House" sign and a smattering of stars on the guest-list. Although there were members of Silver Sun, 3 Colours Red and others of that breed in the crowd on Wednesday night, it was an occasion for the ordinary fan. Most of them hadn't seen him since 1993; one of the reasons Sweet hasn't had much European success is that he has a real problem about getting on a plane. Thankfully, his label stuck him on the QE2 to come to promote his latest album - *Blue Sky on Mars*.

Given the four-year lapse, it was little surprise that the LA2 was a sold-out sweatbox. Right from the start, when they hurried themselves into "Come to California", it was clear that Sweet and his band of long-standing introductions that put him up for the title of most unassuming and unpretentious man in rock, he managed to squeeze in 21 songs in just under 90 minutes. The faithful shouted out their favourite songs at every opportunity and while he would have had to have played another two hours to satisfy all demands, the set list gave a good reflection of everything since *Girlfriend*. In so doing, it revealed lyrics that document love's ups and downs, and flit between Loserville and hedonism.

No sooner had the feedback died down from the last song ("Sick of Myself" - the closest he's come to a hit single) than the sound of a thousand pairs of hands clapping had guaranteed an encore. "Missing Time" came first and then the lights faded and Sweet was alone at the piano for a crisp version of the sublimely moving "I Almost Forgot". That would have been a perfect end but, well, he doesn't come here often, and like four eager-to-please schoolboys, the band bounced back to stretch the usually stringent curfew limits of the LA2 with four upbeat numbers.

It all ended, amid threats of the plug being pulled, with a swift canter through "Teenage Kicks". That Undertones song, as we're so often told, is one of the perfect pop moments, but the fact is that Sweet also has a stack of his own. Given that this country has been indulging itself in the much paler Britpop thing over the past few years, it's one big puzzle as to why this Matthew Sweet guy still often needs an introduction.

Tim Perry

Abigail Toland
WEEK IN
REVIEW



our view on view critical view overview



THE OPERA Platée	THE BALLET Tharp!	THE ALBUM Oasis's Be Here Now
Mark Morris directs and choreographs with comic zest Rameau's parodic baroque opera <i>Platée</i> . The Royal Opera House's first production since being made homeless was at the Edinburgh Festival Theatre. Jean-Paul Fouchécourt sings the high-tenor title role as a frog in drag and the singing chorus belch from a swampy orchestral pit, while Morris's own dance company provide a pantomime energy in couture by Isaac Mizrahi.	Celebrated choreographer Twyla Tharp brings together 11 dancers hand-picked from the US and Europe in three new pieces which come under the self-proclamatory banner of <i>Tharp!</i> . The choice of music is eclectic, ranging from early American hymns to Philip Glass's sadly mundane re-working of David Bowie's <i>Heroes</i> . Only 66 comes up to the usual Tharp scratch, but the programme is athletically entertaining.	Next week the brothers Gallagher expect us to be quivering in deferential anticipation outside HMV as we wait to rush in, sweating and screaming, to lay our hands on their latest <i>magnum opus</i> , <i>Be Here Now</i> . The real question is not whether Oasis are bigger than the Beatles, who were bigger than Jesus, but if anyone can be bothered to listen to a third album of chugging chords and Mancunian whine.
Raymond Monelle enthused: "A marvellous piece... full of satire and pathos... it should touch the heart a bit, but it's hard to commiserate with a frog." A spectacle which defies comparison with anything else on the operatic stage, marvelled the FT. The Times applauded Fouchécourt "who manages to preserve the dignity of Alastair Sim and the chaste flirtatiousness of Jack Lemmon on the chaste assignments", while The Guardian concluded: "It's a bit like <i>The Tales of Beatrix Potter</i> , only far sexier and more dangerous, and with infinitely better music."	"The dancers are sensational," exclaimed Louise Levene, "but it is a pity that Tharp has yet to make her new dancers the works they really deserve." "Assembled in lazy haste," grumbled a disappointed Guardian, only appeared by the "pair of lovers who indulge in some hilariously tense, hormone-drenched sex". The Times was equally titillated by dancers "Stahl and Robinson... so jazzy-cool and sexy-hot that suddenly the lovers' spat gets to the very heart of what Tharp is all about".	"Much the same as before, only louder and denser," cowers Andy Gill, who sneaks in a sly attack: "It sounds like nothing quite so much as The Beatles crossed with Status Quo." The Telegraph was overwhelmed, wondering "just when the kitchen sink is going to make an appearance". The Mirror heralds "the most eagerly awaited album since the Beatles unleashed Sgt Pepper 30 years ago", but Terry Major-Ball disagrees in The Guardian: "a reminder of a late night on orange juice at Peter Stringfellow's night club".
Transfers to the Barbican Centre, London EC2 (0171-638 8891) from 22 September.	<i>Tharp!</i> was at The Playhouse, Edinburgh. It's now finished, but there's more dance to see - try the Netherlands Dance Theatre III's <i>Tears of Laughter</i> , 28-30 Aug (0131-473 2000).	<i>Be Here Now</i> is released on 21 August on Creation records.
Sparkling pantomime opera for the child in us all.	Superb dancing but flat choreography made Tharp's Edinburgh run a mild disappointment.	Opinion is divided. Decide for yourself (by listening to your little brother's copy).

its Happy Hour

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Roy Porter squares up to the secretive creed that claims to link King Solomon's builder with plumbers and policemen today



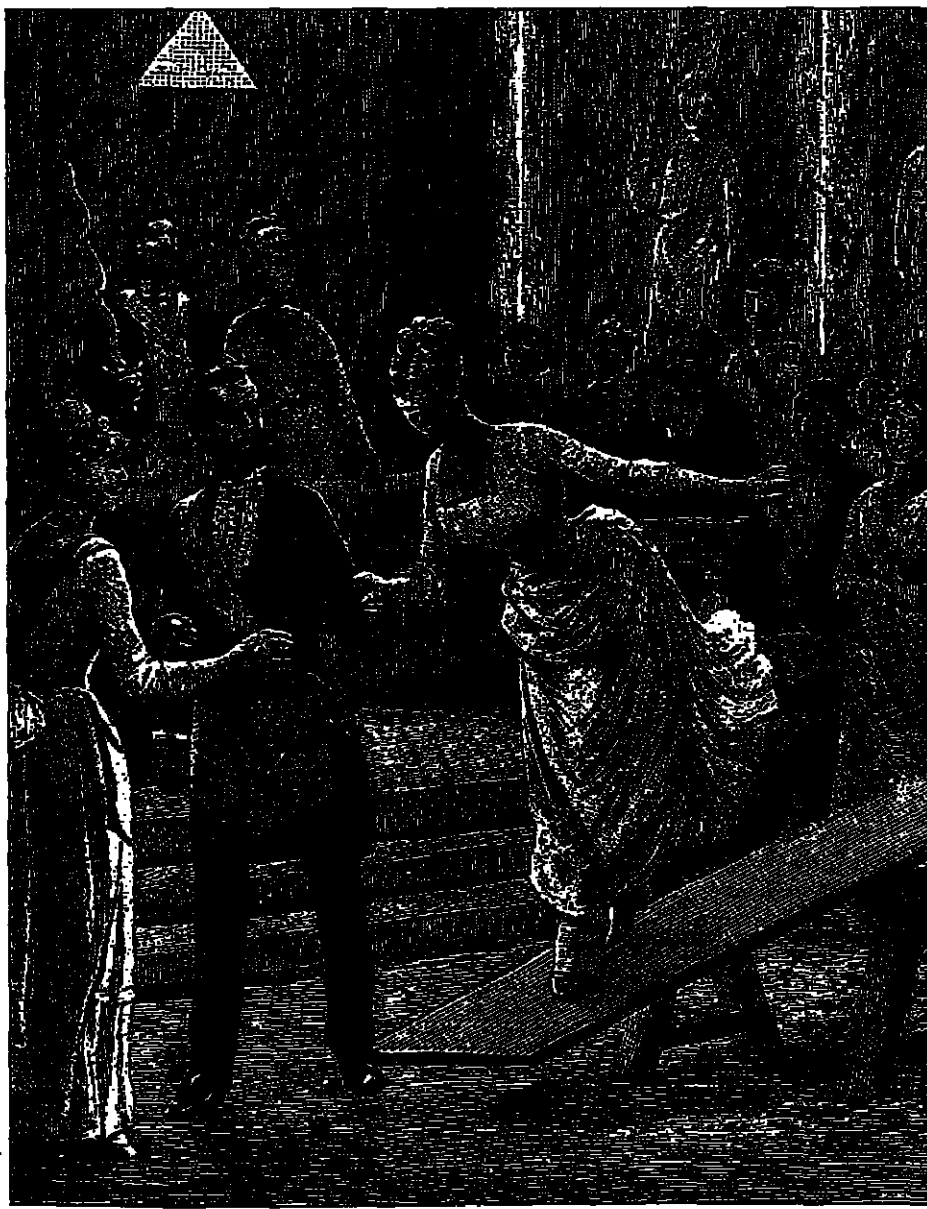
How an old pals' act got DIY religion

Jumping through hoops, clockwise from above left: a prospective candidate for freemasonry experiences an initiation ritual; Edward VII, just one of many royal masons this century; and one of the few female apprentices is given a helping hand into the brotherhood

Who's Afraid of Freemasons? The phenomenon of Freemasonry by Alexander Piatigorsky, Harvill Press, £25

Forget the catchy title: the subtitle gives a true guide to this book's agenda. This is not yet another exposé of middle-class middle-aged males with their trouser legs rolled up, doing school-boyish things at rowdy dinners. Nor is it an investigation into the secret cliques of Masons who, rumour has it, clinch insider business deals, pay off the police and receive favours from the bench thanks to a genteel version of the Mafia principle of looking after your own. Rather, this is a serious philosophical inquiry conducted by someone with all the credentials for such an investigation. A self-confessed non-Mason, Piatigorsky is a professor of comparative religion at the University of London, with books on Buddhism and mythology under his belt. His mission is to probe the much-mocked but little explained "secrets" of the "craft". All those weird symbols – the compasses and aprons, all those rituals of initiation, all those hierarchies of office and uniforms (the brethren of the first, second and third degree): what do they mean? To grasp what Freemasonry purports to stand for, it is essential, Piatigorsky maintains, to go back to its very roots. For it was then that its enduring rites and rules were established (set in stone, one might say). Freemasonry as we know it emerged around the dawn of the 18th century, a distant descendant of the congregations of practical stonemasons who had flourished since the Middle Ages.

"Speculative" masons – that is, those more genteel brethren who did not actually hew stones – were a mix of



nobles and tradesmen who formed lodges for fellowship. As part of the process historians now call "the invention of tradition", they forged for themselves a legendary ancestry which related how an élite of masons had banded together ever since King Solomon had ordained the building of the Temple in Old Testament times. Thereafter, masons had been involved with every great feat of royal or national construction, all the way up to Inigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren.

Why the symbolic attraction of building, rather than any other trade or livery company, for these gentlemen's clubs? It was partly because of the values associated (ideally, at least) with the building

trade. Buildings were symbols of civilisation, strength, solidity, endurance; the builder's art was fair and square, the geometry which formed its foundations also underpinned the hidden harmony of the cosmos. Not least, Freemasons liked to depict the Deity Himself as the Great Architect of the Universe.

From the beginning, rules of conduct were drawn up for the lodges and rites of passage fixed with great precision. Crucial to these were certain mysterious names and terms, and esoteric symbols and gestures, purportedly going back to Hiram, Solomon's builder. This mumbo-jumbo was not intended to spell out a whole way of life, a new morality of right and wrong, a road to sal-

vation, but rather was meant to cement the solidarity of the brotherhood.

It is because rituals have been so central, Piatigorsky argues, that, as movements go, Freemasonry has undergone less change and suffered fewer schisms over the last three centuries than almost any other sect or creed. The secret of Freemasonry lies in being a corpus of ceremonies designed not to save souls or change the world, but to uphold solidarity within.

What this means, Piatigorsky boldly claims, is something Masons themselves generally deny: Freemasonry is a religion – or, at least, a religious phenomenon. And so it was meant to be from the very start – a syncretist faith

which would be perfectly compatible with various Christian confessions, with Judaism or other faiths, something which would approximate to a "natural religion", open to all men. This ideal embodied the fervent desire of its codifiers to create a faith which would unite peoples in brotherhood rather than (as with traditional Christianity) slaughtering them in the name of the Church; hence the appeal of Freemasonry to Enlightenment figures such as Mozart.

Interpreting musty Masonic documents and interviewing prominent Masons, Piatigorsky affords rich insight into a body of practices which has continued to grow in appeal (it is said there are 700,000 Freemasons in Britain, 3.5 million in the USA) despite a general decline of religious faith and secularisation at large. Maybe this success stems from meeting a thirst for ritual which liberalising faiths such as Anglicanism no longer satisfy. That would also explain the abiding hostility of Roman Catholicism towards the craft.

Piatigorsky raises more questions than he answers. Why, one would like to know, given Freemasonry's sincere commitment to a "universalism" transcending creed, colour and nationality, has the movement been so bigoted in its exclusion of women?

That misogyny is particularly interesting in the light of a brief episode of Masonic history which Piatigorsky never addresses: the early lodges of the Netherlands, which did occasionally admit women. Then, can we really accept his view that Freemasonry has typically been "apolitical"?

On his own admission, Continental Freemasonry in the 18th century was openly antagonistic to the old regime; more recently in Britain, lodges have sometimes looked like the Tory Party at supper.

Above all, one would have liked his judgement as to how much of the esoteric creed laid bare here is actually known to, let alone believed in by, your average plumber, publican or policeman Mason in Manchester or Milwaukee. But for making the secrets of the craft less sinister, if no less bizarre, Professor Piatigorsky deserves our handshake.

Held hostage by the Vatican

Peter Stanford explores the Roman folly that shamed the Papacy

The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara by David Kertzer, Picador, £17.99

In one of the most eloquent inter-faith gestures of his pontificate, John Paul II became in 1986 the first pope ever to visit a synagogue. He joined Rome's Jewish community at their place of worship on the Lungotevere and apologised with heartfelt sincerity for Christianity's long history of anti-Semitism.

The gruesome details of the Church's almost 2,000 years of persecution of its spiritual older brothers and sisters are well known – from the medieval demonising of the Jews by the Inquisition, through successive expulsions and massacres, down to the Vatican's shameful silence in the face of the Holocaust. The idea that Jews had committed suicide by killing Jesus was only finally refuted by Rome in 1965. Until then it had fuelled one of the most hateful vendettas in the history of humankind.

John Paul's gesture of reconciliation had a much more particular – if widely neglected – context, as David Kertzer now reveals. Just over a century earlier, Pope Pius IX had shown his utmost contempt for Rome's Jewish community when he refused their anguished pleas for the return of six-year-old Edgardo Mortara to his Jewish parents. Where John Paul sat with head bowed, listening to the synagogue choir singing a hymn chanted by Jews on their way to the Auschwitz gas chambers, another pope at the dawn of the modern period denied Jews any civil rights and played God over the future of their children.

Edgardo was seized in 1858 at dead of night from his loving parents by the Inquisition. The boy, it was said, had been secretly baptised by a Catholic servant girl in the Mortara household when she feared for his life during an illness. According to the perverse logic of the time, that made him a Catholic – and no Catholic could be brought up by Jewish parents.

After they had got over their initial shock, the Mortaras acted like many other victims of miscarriages of justice since. They kept believing someone in authority would realise that it was all a terrible mistake. While they patiently petitioned Pope Pius to overturn the Inquisition's decision, word of their ordeal spread first through Italy's Jewish communities, then to Jews in Europe and North America, and finally to national and world political leaders.

Kertzer, an American social anthropologist, follows the twists and turns of this *cause célèbre*. On one side was the most reactionary and fanatical of popes, stuck in a medieval time-war. On the other, a new wave of hardened anti-clerics and opportunistic politicians such as Count Cavour, who exploited the fate of Edgardo in order to precipitate Italian reunification.

Kertzer argues persuasively that Pius's handling of the whole melodrama provided Cavour with all the ammunition he needed to convince the French Emperor Napoleon III to move against the

remaining papal territories. Pius, in short, demonstrated why his temporal powers were a dangerous anachronism.

Caught in the middle were the Mortara parents and their relatives, mentally and physically destroyed by separation from their son. Out of this human drama, Kertzer fashions an illuminating history of the decline of church power and the rise of an Italian nation.

Taking the lives of "ordinary" people in extraordinary circumstances to shed new light on the past is a tricky undertaking. All too often the attempt ends up lost between narrative and analysis. Kertzer, however, has produced a triumph that deserves to stand alongside such classics as Natalie Davies's *The Return of Martin Guerre* and Aldous Huxley's *The Devils of Loudon*.

The campaign to free Edgardo Mortara had mixed results. Papal power crumbled, as it would surely have done anyway. Italy was reunited. The links between Jews around the globe were immeasurably strengthened. For the first time they co-ordinated a campaign against an oppressor and persuaded public opinion and politicians to back them.

But for the Mortaras there was no happy ending. On the fall of Rome the teenage Edgardo fled to Austria rather than face his parents. He was soon afterwards ordained a priest and spent the rest of his life as a travelling evangelist – a strange vaudeville turn, reworking his own story to convince others to convert. He never saw his father again, and only late in life re-established contact with his mother and siblings. He died in 1940 in Belgium, just as the Nazis began rounding up Jews for the concentration camps.



Pope Pius IX: a 'reactionary and fanatical pope, stuck in a medieval time-war'

Swing time with the sultans of spin

John Rentoul hears gossip from Bobby's gang

Campaign 1997: how the General Election was won and lost by Nicholas Jones, Indigo, £8.99

Nick Jones is an odd journalist. Indefatigable, persistent, obsessive, he is always asking questions of anyone who will listen, punctuated with his trademark "Hm?". He is interested in the mechanics of modern political communications and fascinated by the different tactics used by press officers, in the same way a train-spotter would be by an unusual arrangement of wheels. Like a train-spotter, with his tape recorder and notebook, he patiently records the workings of a system which most people simply regard as a means to an end.

The result is an odd book which in no way justifies its subtitle – as the explanation for Labour's landslide is a complex historical question – but is surprisingly interesting all the same. Jones's prime oddity is that he takes spin doctors seriously and sees them as the proper subject of reporting.

Like his previous book, *Soundbites and Spin Doctors*, much of this one is simply an extended diary of his working life as a BBC journalist. That means it is weighed down by trivial detail about news stories of no lasting importance, but studied with revealing bursts of dialogue written down

almost verbatim from Charlie Whelan, Alastair Campbell and David Hill (press officers respectively for Gordon Brown, Tony Blair and the Labour Party) and from Peter Mandelson, who holds a mythic status in the spin doctorate. The Tories are much less open, and most of the time Jones quotes them trotting out the party line. His account sparks to life when the Labour spinners work themselves into a lather of foul-mouthed fury with journalists or, in the case of Whelan on Mandelson, start dissing each other.

Whelan complains to Jones that "Mandelson has been bollocking me all morning", and has constantly tried to undermine him. He admits that it was he who leaked the identity of "Bobby", the secret friend whom Blair thanked in his speech after winning the Labour leadership. This was Mandelson's codename, used to conceal his role from Blair supporters who were hostile to him. "I don't care who knows what I did after the way Mandelson abused me in the leadership election," Whelan says.

This is all trivial enough, except that it is, as Jones points out, symptomatic of tensions at a higher level, principally between Brown and Blair. The frustration of the book is that he takes it no farther than that. After many pages of detailing the spinning, speculating and reporting behind Labour's decision not to raise income

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Behind the wall of words

Roger Clarke wants to hear from tweedy Scots as well as groovy ones

It's often said of the Irish that their greatest "revenge" on Britain was to requisition the English language and use it better than the English themselves. The Scots road, according to the school of thought promoted by the writer and editor Duncan McLean, is to reclaim forms of native "dialect" as a sign of rebellion, nationalism and literary transgression — all rolled into one tartan juggernaut. So are Scots writers now reduced to being the purveyors of mere *oor Willie* speech, as quaint in its own way as anything produced by Walter Scott, except that it now happens to be about junkies?

Of course, Scots — a language as old as standard English — has every right not to be called a dialect. Furthermore, it has been a mainstream and acceptable literary tongue north of the Border for centuries. Even the colonial-style funkies of the 18th-century Edinburgh literary scene who were then trying to remove Scots words from their local language had good things to say about Burns's muscular and drubbingly authentic verse.

Among more recent idioms, James Kelman has made his *Gorbals* speech acceptable to Booker judges. Equally implausibly, Irvine Welsh has made the most impenetrable argot available to the masses all over Britain. And behind Welsh stands

his editor at Jonathan Cape: Robin Robertson, the intriguing *eminence grise* of the Scots new wave.

The way that Robertson has brought his expertise with groovy Scots writing to the service of a metropolitan publisher shows how far a once-marginal phenomenon has come. Now, as if trying both to rebut the new Scots stereotype of urban decay and drugs, and to confirm it, Cape has published *Lone Star Swing* (£9.99) and *Ahead of Its Time* (£9.99). They are respectively written and edited by the Ezra Pound of the recent Scots literary efflorescence, Duncan McLean himself.

But what immediately strikes you about some of the figures in the anthology *Ahead of Its Time* (an aptly titled summing-up of McLean's cult imprint, *The Clocktower Press*) is that writers such as Alison Kerrack often use what passes for dialect, when it is in fact a private idiolect. Their massaged spellings make individual linguistic quirks and accents look like pidgin.

It is worrying when, for instance, Robert Alan Jamieson has to resort to Scandinavian letters in his work to make himself feel authentic as a Shetland writer — as if a Dorset writer were to resur-

rect a Jutish vocabulary and then provide a glossary, as Jamieson does, to make himself understood. These things must be kept in perspective. It's a shame that the expressive Anglo-Saxon "thorn" letter has vanished from English — but that is that, even though its sound survives. Writers have to accept the ebb and flow of language.

Despite the references to rebellion (*Clocktower's* samizdat offshoot *Rebel Inc.* was snapped up by the Edinburgh publisher Canongate as a "happening" imprint), there's an innate conservatism to much of the writing in both *Ahead of Its Time* and the new Picador Book of Contemporary Scottish Fiction, edited by Peter Kravitz (Picador £16.99). Some of Kravitz and McLean's pronouncements have a busy, ardent, folksy, half-cynical and Malcolm McLaren-ish quality. This is the sound of young Turks raging against the Establishment shortly before they take it over. Does anyone really care if the Scottish Arts Council was mean to them? Not really. The fight fuelled their cause. Arts bureaucrats have always been like that and always will be.

Even when McLean travels abroad to Texas, in

amusing pursuit of his passion for the folk-roots of country-western music in *Lone Star Swing*, he can't forget he's a Scot. He corrects anti-British slurs not by saying these are vile stereotypes, but "no, they don't apply to me because I'm a Scot".

He also catches the virus of American racial specialisation (he's interested in culture of the Orkneys, where he lives, with its Scandinavian antecedents). McLean's identification with this backward-looking aspect of US culture is worrying, but it shows where his true allegiance lies: not with the experiments in craft and subject that more transgressive writers strive for, especially in the States. Rather, it's about fancy dress, kitsch and mawkish sentimentality. Nationalism has to be the least transgressive subject on the planet.

I'm sure many of the writers included in these anthologies would cringe at any notion of nationhood being hung about their shoulders. Welsh, for one, has always railed against the provincialism of Scots writing, but presumably this is a variety of provincialism from which he, Kravitz and McLean feel themselves quite safe. The success of Welsh (currently writing a novel "about a trans-

vestite Edinburgh policeman", to be called *Filth*) has been so meteoric that any sensible discussion of his work has to be held on a cultural rather than a purely literary level. Put simply, he is a solitary phenomenon and a lot of his contemporaries are trying to haul themselves up on his coat-tails.

Comparing these two anthologies, it's important to distinguish Kravitz's serious attempt to analyse the shifting spectrum of contemporary Scots fiction — with modernists and traditionalists alike — from the self-aggrandising efforts of McLean's ventures. Kravitz is happy to include distinctly ungroovy writers such as Jackie Kay and Allan Massie (though not Charles Palliser's successful pastiches). In this sense, he is more favourable to the tweedy conservatism deplored by Welsh, who no doubt would have a few choice words to say about the exclusion of his beloved Alexander Troch, whom he calls "the George Best of Scottish literature". The Picador anthology also uses little of the raw "dialect" so prized by McLean.

Kravitz's editorial faults lie mostly in his earnestness. McLean's, in his lack of discrimination. Between the twin poles of these books lies the truth of Scots writing — a culture with as many king-makers and frauds as any other, but also with more than its fair share of potential genius.



Waving the flag for Britain: the Olympic team sets off for Paris in Hugh Hudson's 'Chariots of Fire'

Charge of the light brigade

Charles Drazin salutes the heroic failures of British film

Films and British National Identity: from Dickens to *Dad's Army* by Jeffrey Richards. Manchester University Press, £14.99. Waving the Flag: constructing a National Cinema in Britain by Andrew Higson. Clarendon Press, £13.99.

There is a new optimism about the British cinema. The National Lottery has poured millions into production, a new film-friendly government has given the industry generous tax breaks, cinema attendances have rocketed, and the British-made *The English Patient*, although admittedly financed with American money, cleaned up at the Oscars. But if the British film industry is indeed enjoying yet another "renaissance", it is only because it has collapsed so many times before. Fabulous achievement has always been a prelude to disaster. Remember Colin Welland, flushed with the success of *Chariots of Fire*, warning Hollywood that "The British are coming!" Shortly afterwards the industry was on its deathbed — again.

Andrew Higson's *Waving the Flag* contains some sobering lessons from the past for those film producers lucky in the Lottery. He writes of a film which was hailed by the trade papers as "perhaps the outstanding picture of the year", yet with its imported American star was acknowledged to be "produced on lines frankly designed to appeal to America". Not *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, with its travel-brochure vision of Britain and Andie MacDowell in 1994, but *Woman to Woman* with Betty Compson — in 1924.

Twenty years later its producer Michael Balcon, who in the Thirties lost a lot of money trying to appeal

to the Americans, pursued the opposite policy at Ealing. He championed a native, self-sufficient cinema, "projecting Britain and the British character".

This has always been the dilemma for the British producer — make big films that will appeal to an American market, or little ones that can get by in the British. If the National Lottery seems a peculiarly apt source of funding, it is because whatever the decision, the only certainty hitherto has been that sooner or later the losses will far outweigh the gains.

Higson's dry but thorough analysis of the British cinema's strategies for survival in the face of Hollywood's dominance has its depressing aspect, but there is something genuinely heroic about the way the British keep on trying. This is in itself, I suppose, a very British quality. We are, after all, the nation of Scott, Dunkirk and the Charge of the Light Brigade: one of our most treasured ideas about ourselves is that we lose with style.

In *Films and National Identity*, Jeffrey Richards traces the representation of the British on film, from the Korda Empire epics of the Thirties to the "heritage" films of the present day. "National identity" is such an imprecise notion, cutting across class and region, that these celluloid images of Britain are inevitably full of contradiction. Is it the English who are famed for their reserve, or just the middle to upper classes in the Home Counties? The passage of time has also brought with it stark contrasts. The notions of duty, civic responsibility and restraint that so permeated the cinema of the Forties became a joke in the Sixties. Richards describes attending a showing of *Brief Encounter* in 1967 at which the audience were

"convulsed with laughter throughout, incredulous that the lovers did not just leap into bed together". Thirty years on — perhaps because the permissive society has long lost its novelty — the film rings true again.

Rooted as much in sentiment as in objective observation, national identity is as different from true character as heritage is from history. It is a tool we resort to, especially in moments of crisis. So it is not surprising that the most powerful images of this country date from the Second World War. Of Humphrey Jennings's wartime films, Lindsay Anderson wrote in the early Fifties that "They will speak for us to posterity, saying: 'This is what it was like. This is what we were like — the best of us.'" Yet at the end of the Sixties Raymond Durnat could complain of "their near-jingoism" and "the clichés at which the gorges and hackles of Osborne's generation were to rise".

What kind of cinema will the new generation of British producers bet their Lottery money on? As illuminating as his book often is, it would be a pity if they followed Richards's recipe. Profoundly disenchanted with the materialism of contemporary society, he believes the Sixties to be the decade when the rot set in. A period in British cinema we should treasure for its *joie de vivre* and openness, he regrets for its "self-indulgent individualism". In his final chapter, celebrating *Dad's Army* for its vision of "common purpose and good neighbourliness", he reveals himself to be a "nostalgist". In past ideas of national identity we can find lessons for now, he suggests — as if the sense of community and idealism of the Thirties and Forties could be separated from the conflicts and adversity that brought them into being.

A WEEK IN BOOKS at the Edinburgh Festival



BOYD TONKIN

David Hume famously scoffed at the notion of post-mortem consciousness, but even the arch-sceptic may be spinning in his grave. Tomorrow, the book festival in his native Edinburgh will host a day of talks devoted to the value of *feng shui* in its "Lifestyle Tent". This touchy-feely teepee shelters a fortnight of New Age-accented shindigs as a sideshow to the more orthodox events. Adding insult to injury, the canvas Temple of Unreason stands with the other Festival marquees at the heart of Robert Adam's Charlotte Square in the New Town — a pure Enlightenment sermon in stone. It faces the tent in which BT showcases the hi-tech glories of electronic publishing. Someone is hedging their bets. But business looked brisk earlier this week as visitors checked out sessions on acupuncture, aromatherapy, Thai massage and all points east.

However much the Edinburgh organisers try to gloss *feng shui* as a sort of turbocharged interior design, it remains a form of ancient earth magic, or geomancy. As a long-lived superstition, it ranks with (say) Tarot-reading and astrology, neither of which yet has a niche in Charlotte Square. It was Hume's own landmark essay "On Miracles" — itself one of Edinburgh's greatest gifts to European thought — that found the last word on the New Age, back in 1748. Hume shakes a wry head at "the usual propensity of mankind towards the marvellous" before accepting that this urge "can never be thoroughly extirpated from human nature".

Acceptance is one thing; encouragement quite another. Yet Dr Ian Fairley, the Book Festival's new director, has arguably struck a useful blow for cultural glasnost by spotlighting "personal issues of belief and lifestyle" in her first programme. What the trade calls "mind, body and spirit" publishing still flourishes mightily. To the huge pub-

lic that treats Hume's Enlightenment — especially in its scientific guise — as just another outworn creed, these works manage to refresh the parts other ideas cannot reach.

They fill acres of bookshop space (you can always find more books on astrology than on astronomy, Richard Dawkins often complains). They crowd the best-seller lists, propelled high into the charts by money-spinning serial deals with shameless middle-market newspapers. And they keep almost every intellectual charlatan known to European history solidly in print. No one save students and scholars now reads Hume's great forerunner, Michel de Montaigne — the only modern writer Shakespeare ever copied almost word for word (in *The Tempest*). Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands still pore over the gibberish rhymes of Montaigne's French contemporary, Nostradamus.

This vast bookish underworld — which keeps scores of publishers in funds, and armies of readers content — has almost no diplomatic relations with mainstream literary life. And that should bother mainstream literary folk more than it evidently does.

The Edinburgh "lifestyle" strand makes a gesture towards contact by welcoming the softer, therapeutic end of New Age thought (literally) into its camp. It nonetheless stays safely in a little ghetto. Punters who turn up for Roy Hattersley or Pat Barker, Kate Atkinson or Mario Vargas Llosa, need not know about the reflexology or "herbs for pets" advice going on across the square. Only Lynne Franks (unabashedly labelled by the brochure as "the inspiration for Edina" in *AbFab*) can be relied upon to straddle the gap.

Next year, perhaps, the Festival should bite the bullet and stage a full-scale debate between the deep-dyed mystics and the hardcore rationalists. If David Hume really had a ghost, it would surely float along to that.

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INDEPENDENT CHOICE

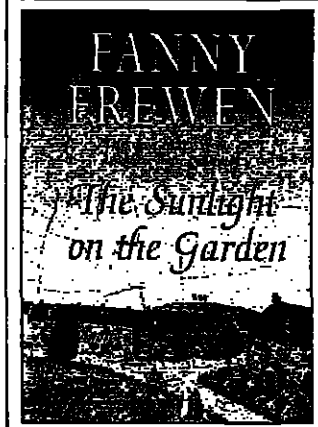
RURAL RIDES by Carol Birch

English village life provides the backdrop for three new novels this month, its enclosed nature a foil for dramas ranging from the romantic and fanciful to the darkly claustrophobic and exquisitely subtle. Sue Prideaux's debut, *Rude Mechanicals* (Abacus, £8.99), is an odd concoction of black humour, cool irony and sentimentality. Lucy and Peter Skeffington are a gentrified couple approaching middle age by means of a growing communication gap. This polite rift centres upon Peter's unspoken desire for, and Lucy's instinctive resistance to, the adoption of Danny, inmate of a highly improbable local home for young offenders. So hellish is this place, with its repulsive "guardian" and his sadistic henchman, so innocent is Danny, with his *Oliver Twist* air and wistful questions ("where does the wind come from?"), that we are reminded of Dickens. The comparison is compounded by the fanciful nature of the characters playing out their interlinked dramas around the central axis. The vicar's crook-backed companion obsesses over animal rights, whispering mantra-like his favourite word ("utensil utensil") to calm his nerves. The garage owner is a religious fanatic who insists on all family names being drawn from the Bible, and whose granddaughters are called Jezebel and Salome.

For the most part, Sue Prideaux juggles her extensive cast with skill; her dry, at times acrid, humour and sudden glimpses of the pit balance the full-blown romance of Danny, the pure soul adrift in an evil world.

Romance of a more traditional kind is on offer in Katie Fforde's *Stately Pursuits* (Michael Joseph, £9.99). When Hetty Longden goes to house-sit great-uncle Samuel's crumbling stately home she finds herself drawn into a fight to save the old house from the philistine plans of Samuel's heir, who wants to sell the site to developers. Unlike Prideaux's grotesques, these villagers are a friendly bunch. Mrs Hemstead, formidable matriarch with a heart of gold, makes damson wine and is a dead ringer for Miss Hubbard in *Postman Pat*. The local Brownie pack leader has the looks of a supermodel and, conveniently, a SNAG (Sensitive New Age Guy) lives only a dog's walk away.

Will Hetty succumb to his "perfect son-in-law" charms? Or will she fall for dreaded heir Connor Barrabin, dubbed by the villagers Conan the Barbarian? The mid-



Pick of the week
The Sunlight on the Garden
by Fanny Frewen

night arrival of this craggy, bear-like man and his subsequent enforced cohabitation with Hetty herald a pro-

longed drama of barbed sparring, spiced with sexual chemistry. This lacks entirely the element of tension, as, from the moment we discover that for all his taciturn rumblings he's a dab hand in the kitchen, it's a foregone conclusion that she'll end up in his masterful but sensitive embrace. The fictional village of Swannere in Fanny Frewen's *The Sunlight on the Garden* (Century, £15.99) is an altogether more believable place inhabited by believable people. Gentle, kindly Marion, whose childless state is her enduring regret, has been married for 20 years to Jeremy, who commutes to a willing mistress and a good job in the City. Marion keeps an immaculate house and throws perfect, elegant dinner parties. She has, however, a retreat, her "strange place": a wild garden below the proper garden, where growth runs unchecked. Only the children of her neighbours, the Fenbys, had shared this with her throughout their childhood. When an anniversary party brings the four grown children back to Swannere, the scene is set for a poignant drama of infidelity, reconciliation and acceptance. Peter, the eldest Fenby son, unhappily drifting into a loveless marriage, embarks on an affair with Marion. Totally infatuated and quietly desperate, he watches the inexorable process of his own wedding plan as if it were a natural phenomenon beyond his control. When Marion becomes pregnant, having taken her own infertility for granted for three years, she allows her husband to believe the child is his. The two draw closer, reaffirming their marriage.

Truth breaks through, however, in an unexpected and moving way. Fanny Frewen's clear, dispassionate prose never falters, its restraint adding depth and dignity to the moments of passion and pain. Situations and characters are complex, nothing is predictable and Frewen eschews the easy options of fictional convention to create a sense of the real messiness of life. She celebrates the value of compromise and the courage ordinary people find within themselves to survive and find meaning in situations that are less than perfect.

She has been called "the new Mary Wesley" but the comparison seems to be based on little more than generational factors. Fanny Frewen has her own individual voice.

The Waiting Game by Bernice Rubens,
Little, Brown, £15.99.

If Bernice Rubens ever goes to the US, she could find herself picketed by Betty Friedan and her commandos of the Third Age. In an era when senior citizens are exhorted to cast off their Zimmer frames and take up bungy-jumping, Rubens's new novel presents a vision of old age that owes nothing to political correctness.

"The Hollyhocks" is a home for the aged on England's south coast. For the retired gentlefolk who live there, it is a kind of pre-purgatory, a place of small comfort where everyone is waiting to die. It is the house rule that this pencilled appointment with the reaper should under no circumstances be acknowledged. Residents who flout regulations are severely dealt with. When the mild-mannered Mrs Hughes becomes incontinent her peers round on her with the ferocity of "pack baboons". "She knew that they were complaining, not because of her unkempt appearance or her rancid smell. It was because she was a constant reminder to them all that wetting one's knickers and going to bed with one's shoes on was an essential rule of the waiting game they were all playing. She herself, wet and dishevelled, embodied the check before the final mate."

It is rare for a novelist to dwell on the reality of old age. The aged in fiction, and arguably in life, are generally relegated to comedy cameos or else to their characters in flashback. In dealing with the circumstances here and now of her characters' lives, Rubens shows clear-eyed compassion. Unconstrained by authorial overview, "The Hollyhocks" residents reinvent themselves as they see fit. The players' true natures are only gradually revealed and the effect of this slow denouement is all the more shocking.

Beneath the refined ritual, passions and perversion are stirring. The residents' secret lives include clandestine addictions, chat lines, cherry brandy, an upper-class blackmail business, sexual sadism and apocalyptic Nazi war crimes.

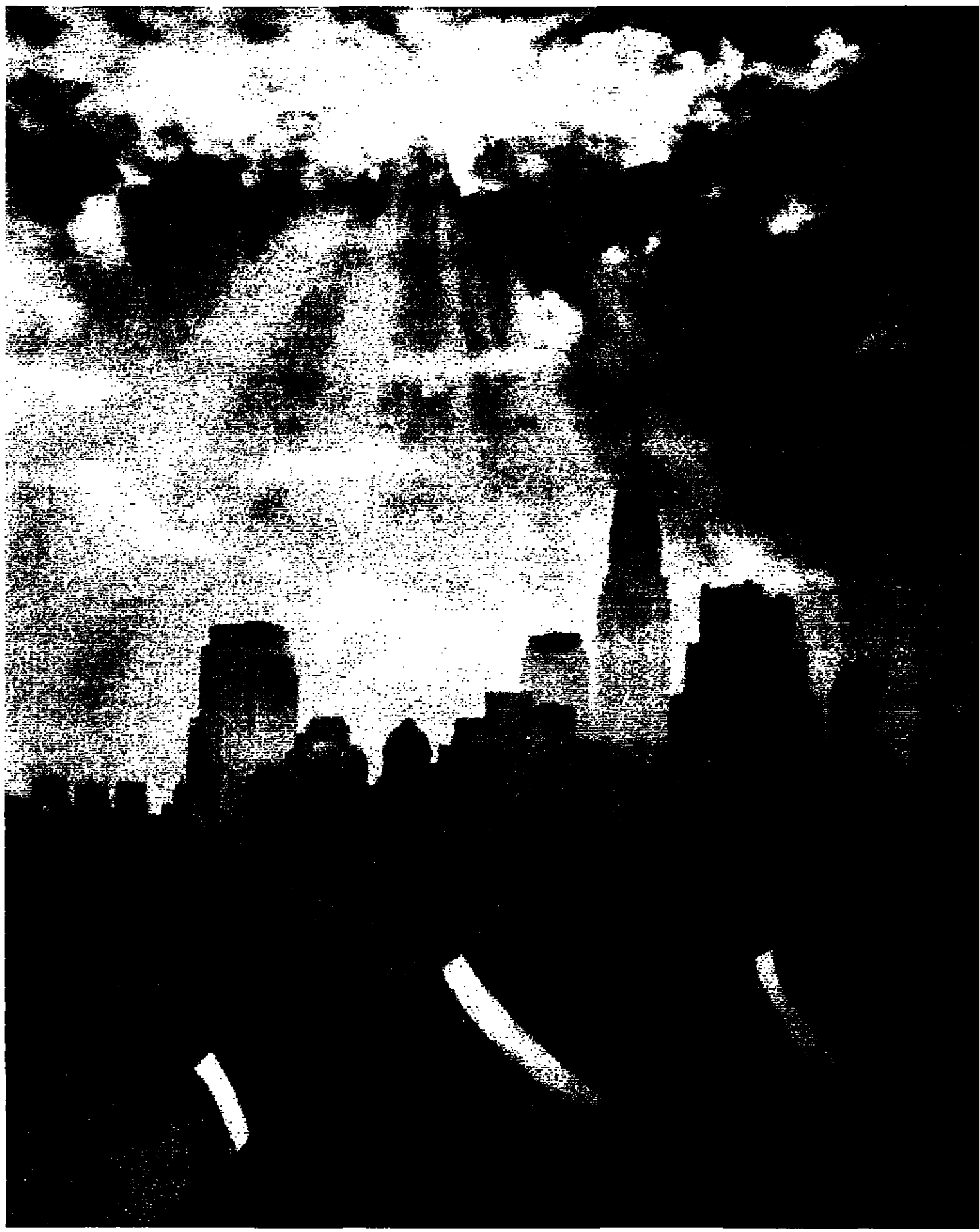
Rubens is grimly determined that her readers should see beyond the shawls and slippers. When little Miss Bellamy starts shrieking obscenities to the baby Jesus on the Christmas tree, her libidinous ravings are dismissed by marion as "a little turn". "Is that what they called it?" Miss Bellamy laughed. "Well it was a turn in its way but a very big turn. I turned into my true self."

Rubens has a sharp ear for the gentle soundings of the middle classes and a killer instinct for scenting hypocrisy. A strange nephew with great expectations turns up at his aunt's funeral with "a solemn

face as separate as a handkerchief". Merciless in her judgement of individuals, Rubens shows strong sympathy for the general plight of her characters. The Hollyhocks' residents, however affluent, are the castaways of society, marooned on their comfortably appointed island and left to die.

A well-meaning Christmas gift of fancy writing paper becomes a poignant symbol of their condition. "There were those who were in awe of the sheer expense of the gift, and for the moment that awe procured any action. But there were those who bypassed the awe, unimpressed by the cost, and found the gift faintly offensive. For what purpose could it be used? To whom could they write 'how are you' or 'thank you for your visit' or 'how kind of you to remember my birthday' or 'many thanks for your invitation'. To whom could they write anything at all? The wounds of loneliness and isolation were painful enough without Mrs Feinberg's sprinkling of a pinch of salt."

On the whole, Rubens is a better storyteller than she is a stylist. The central image of the waiting game is laboured to a point where it becomes irritating, with the reader actively willing the players to die and be done with it. But it is the unmistakable odour of despair that hangs in the nostrils long after this honest and humane book is set aside.



The creative camera at work: Albert Fassbender, one of the leading exponents of the American tradition of pictorial photography, took this powerful photograph of Manhattan in 1934. At a time when the American public's passion for 'photographs that were abstract, humorous, surreal, picturesque, avant garde and campy' was at its height, Fassbender, born in Germany in 1894 and apprenticed to a professional photographer in Cologne at the age of 13, was adept at manipulating his images to suit his adoptive country's tastes: 'he could delete telephone poles, add clouds, and make a single picture from up to four negatives'. More examples of this early practitioner of the paparazzo's art can be seen in 'After the Photo-Secession: American pictorial photography, 1910-1955' by Christian A Peterson (MIA/Norton)

Unsentimental journey

E Jane Dickson enjoys a pitiless portrait of old age

PAPERBACKS



By Christopher Hirst
and Emma Hagestad

Hollywood Blue by Harris Gaffin (Batsford, £14.99) A breezy exploration of the lucrative sub-stratum of Tinseltown which specialises in such gems as *For Your Thighs Only*, and *The Best Chest in the West*. Declaring that "the porno people are my noble savages", the author is scarcely a fly-on-the-wall reporter. Like Rupert Bear, he appears in almost every illustration in his book. Throughout this assiduous study, which takes him from the FOXE Awards (Friends of X Entertainment) to the set of *Conquest*, a porn pirate epic, Gaffin maintains an unwitting interest.

Junk Food Monkeys by Robert M Sapolsky (Headline, £9.99) A biologist specialising in baboon behaviour, Sapolsky is the most readable of science writers on the human condition. His essay titles are great: "Why you feel crummy when you're sick" explains how normal life shuts down when the body concentrates on repairing itself, and "The night you ruined your pyjamas" probes the increasingly early onset of puberty. The title essay reveals that baboons on a natural diet have enviably low cholesterol, while those dining on human food in rubbish dumps are prone to diabetes.

Servant of the Bones by Anne Rice (Arrow, £5.99) The queen of soft porn and apocalyptic imaginings, Rice describes an America even more frightening than the one inhabited by David Koresh and the Unabomber. When a young girl is hacked to pieces in a well-known Fifth Avenue department store, her death is witnessed not only live on television, but also by an avenging angel: an ancient Babylonian with luxuriant black hair and eyelashes to match.

I Lost My Heart to the Belles by Pete Davies (Mandarin, £7.99) Entranced by the Doncaster Belles football team, the author moved his family to Yorkshire. The resulting paean is a winner, packed with drama and deadpan humour. Asked if she's been training, one stalwart replies: "Yeah, I ran down the shop for me fags." Davies finds a sportsmanship long gone from the male game: "It was a stupendous game calling up all the big adjectives - titanic, heroic, epic. Also honest and free of malice." You don't need to be a sports fan to enjoy it, though some may wish there were less about ligaments.

A Pure Clear Light by Madeleine St John (Fourth Estate, £5.99) Simon and Flora live with their three clever children, Volvo estate and Heal's furniture in a nice street in Hammersmith. But come July, Simon decides to skip the annual holiday in Périgord and write a screenplay. Instead he ends up in bed with an energetic accountant called Gillian. A crisply told tale of metropolitan anomie that might have been penned by Josephine Hart - only it's better.

The Mammoth Book of Ancient Wisdom by Cassandra Eason (Robinson, £9.99) From Aboriginal Magic ("Becoming a *mekigra*, *karadji* or clever man involves complex initiation rites") to Water Magic (the whiteness of the Dover cliffs is attributed to the soap of a Viking chief), Ms Eason has trawled through 40 different types of "wisdom", gathering all manner of rites, beliefs and lore to amaze the credulous.

We learn that bread should never be sliced, that a row of empty tins can divine the future and that a "ship" shape in tea-leaves indicates "travel, possibly far away".

AUDIOBOOKS

Isak Walton's "gleanings and observations" on the "contemplative man's recreation" are, he explains, in *The Compleat Angler* (BBC, 1hr 50mins, £8.99), as much "a picture of my own disposition at such times as I have laid aside business and gone a fishing" as an effort to "make a man that was none to be an angler by a book". The absurdity of the idea recalls a glorious age when practice made perfect, and self-help manuals were unknown. This tape is wonderful listening, full of "innocent, harmless mirth" as well as tall stories about the love-life and morality of fish and fowl. It is read by Richard Johnson, who enters into the spirit of this most engaging of literary companions with marvellous mellifluous.

Christina Hardyment

Adèle by Mary Flanagan,
Bloomsbury, £12.99

Mary Flanagan has a studiously decadent side, a quirk that makes her fall in love with the smiles that smell of money, the good accent and the warning cruelties of a guy called Miles. Miles crops up in one of Flanagan's short stories and in a novel; she has written two books of each form.

But while this reader, at least, can't go the whole kilometre with Miles, I can follow Flanagan into all her other canyons of place and mind. Born in New Hampshire, but resident in Britain for her adult life, Flanagan writes equally

well of small-town Catholic families in the state whose licence plate reads Live Free Or Die (and they're not talking intellectual freedom) and of the baffled odysseys of the youngish urban arty crowd, rootless and a bit cokey. Perhaps her best work is found in her first collection of short fiction, *Bad Girls*. Its unsparing story about an American child who is abused by her sister, and its fables of mostly British middle-class women who go dramatically mad - abducting the adolescent son of a best friend, attacking an Asian woman on a bus, or, after years of compliance, shooting a shitty lover - break the heart.

Flanagan is capable of such rare emotional intensity and precision that *Adèle*, her third

novel, reads as if it were written over an opaque frontispiece with an illustration of something important infuriatingly obscured. I had to read it twice to make sure that I hadn't gone blind. But no: what is meant as a lark, or a bold interrogation into the nature of sexuality through the artifice of a Gothic Romance, unexpectedly lacks Flanagan's habitual exhilaration and sureness.

There are two interwoven stories here. The contemporary tale concerns a trio of thirty-fourish cosmopolitans: a familiar Flanagan mix of American and British, but surprisingly dull. For this, vaguely feminist reasons (the didactically political has never been on Flanagan's agenda),

they band together in quest of the restitution of some body parts which they believe should be buried with their owner. These "artefacts", we learn tantalisingly slowly, are a mummified clitoris and a ditto penis or, as we first perceive it, a "brown speckled object". The trail to bury these bits, and perhaps make a documentary about the matter, leads to the Pyrenean town of their heroine's birth and to an adventure which might remind one of the true, and gripping, excesses of the *Bad Girls* if the trio and the writing weren't so unconvincing.

The other story, narrated in the first person to a vocative You, is by far the more compelling: a thriller in structure and a great

tease. Its teller is an Englishwoman of 89 living in a nursing home in the same Pyrenean town. She recalls, in excited prose, her years with the titular heroine, whom her brother recruited her to look after. The Englishwoman is dull and unattractive; Adèle is a wild child, "scandalously beautiful", who has been bought by the brother, a gynaecologist. As the time is the Thirties, genetic engineering and thus gynaecology are in the air - along with a lot of hot air pertaining to alchemy, hermaphroditism and satanic contracts, as well as plain prostitution, pimping, voyeurism and what seems more like snuff than eroticism.

Horrible maimings are enacted by the gynec, though not quite

how and to whom we thought. Breathless revelations of anatomy are delivered. Blanche's torrid tale, which swooningly endows Adèle with the stereotypical attributes of the *femme fatale* while conjuring her as victim of the highest order, streaks past decadence into bathos.

Somewhere an opportunity has been lost for exploring not only the nature of sexual attraction (in a lesbian guise, we are mistakenly led to believe) but of that perhaps more interesting and certainly urgent subject, sexual identity. A perfectly good mummified penis has been binned. Flanagan's novels have flirted dangerously with romance but just about stayed on the high wire. Here she makes us a present of an unapologetic entertainment. But as with most works that have diversion as their central motive, *Adèle* is greatly less diverting than Flanagan's other, paradoxically more exuberant, sexy and serious work.

Bending genders and genres

Victoria Radin is disappointed by a decadent diversion

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PAPERBACKS

travel & outdoors

A summer of love, the King remembered...10,11
Rambling in Dorset13
Pictures of Lily: Monet's inspiration. Gardening workshop.....14, 15



Air of playas

One transfer, two trips. Simon and the Costa Blanca's resort as a package

The package holiday: an outdated institution, or the happy conclusion of 30 years of mass-market foreign travel? The way to make a reasoned judgement was to take two short breaks in a single place: one as an independent traveller, the other on an off-the-shelf package. The destination had to be the single favourite resort for British holiday-makers: Benidorm, on Spain's Costa Blanca.

Now, there are some parts in the world where taking sequential holidays in the same location may not appeal, but as a duplicate destination the Costa Blanca is ideal. Deliberately, the two trips diverged at certain points – notably on the choice and location of accommodation. Almost all the rooms in Benidorm itself are block-booked by tour operators, but the fine city of Alicante offers an equally good base for visiting Benidorm and exploring the coast further.

In a moment, the match report, complete with match-play results. But first, the setting.

The resort
A lot of people scoff about Benidorm, but not, in my experience, people who have been there. What more could you want? Benidorm has arguably the finest beach in the Mediterranean – or rather, a brace of them, poised eloquently like a pair of wings between two rocky promontories. And, unlike the norm in many resorts, the closer you get to the sun and sea, the more civilised things become. The promenade is really quite prim, and like the beach is spotlessly clean. The promenade is rewarded with some elaborate sand sculptures, from a crucifixion (rendered horizontally, for reasons of gravity) to representations of assorted Spanish monuments to save you the bother of travelling to Barcelona or Seville.

Benidorm's old town presides over this whole splendid affair from a central outcrop: if the beaches are wings, this is the body of the bird. True, the vista reveals about two dozen high-rises too many, but the formidable mountain range behind the town dwarf man's feeble attempts at altitude. The spaces between the blocks are filled mostly with shops, restaurants and bars. The latter compete so intensely that you need never pay more than £1 for a pint of lager (and, yes, it will be a pint; British drinkers need not fret about troublesome quantities like pesetas and litres).

Its million visitors a year means Benidorm is one of the richest communities in Spain. And some of

the earnings are spent on the town's finest municipal moment: the Parque de l'Alguera. This broad, green scar curves a course for a kilometre inland, and is a finely manicured modernist concoction whose lavish trimmings – a small quarry's worth of marble, for a start – are entirely thanks to tourists like me.

The area
Follow the park to its logical conclusion, and you end up at the railway station which is the key to any happy holiday on the Costa Blanca. The neat little yellow-and-white Costa Blanca Express shuttles back and forth along the coast. Almost every station on its modest run deserves a visit: Vilajoyosa, the thoroughly Spanish antithesis to Benidorm; Alicante itself, draped across the foothills, where the old town resonates with layers of history, yet houses a powerful modern art museum. And Calpe, an upmarket resort which unravels magnificently into the Med then culminates in a sore old tooth of a hill perched at the end of the peninsula.

The booking
Both trips were selected in the spirit of generations of British tourists, ie as cheaply as possible. For the independent trip, I found a cut-price flight from Gatwick to the gateway airport of Alicante through the small ads. Everything else was arranged as I went along.

The great thing about booking a package holiday, so the travel industry maintains, is that it is the easiest purchase in the world. Everything can, in theory, be fixed in a single transaction. So it can – but only after you have done enough studying of brochures to earn an A-level in Hyperbole with Tricky Sums. After working through an entire syllabus-worth of brochures and infinite combinations of dates/times/supplements, I concluded that the cheapest holiday of the summer in Benidorm was offered by Skytours, the budget brand of Thomson. After much study on my part, the travel agent had the easy bit – I asked for the precise holiday, and she tapped into the Thomson reservation system to book it. Result: a tie.

The flight
Almost all Thomson holiday-makers fly with the company's in-house airline, Britannia. On Election Day this year, the Seventies image of Britannia's Royal Service was thrown out as emphatically as the Major government, and replaced by a smooth,

Nineties version called 360 Class. The cabin service, in common with that on all the leading British charter airlines, was excellent: good meals and free in-flight entertainment even on a two-hour hop (which was right on schedule, outbound and in).

The way they manage to provide so much is, of course, because so many holiday-makers are packed in. But miserly legroom apart, standards on UK charter carriers exceed those on most scheduled airlines.

The cheap, seat-only deal I found was at the other end of the spectrum, on a Spanish charter airline. This was air-travel-as-commodity. But it arrived in the right place on about the right day.

Winner: package, by an air mile or more.

The transfer
However good or gruelling the flight, arriving at Alicante airport is an awakening of the ruder kind. The only way to escape the feeling that you are being processed with as little dignity as a tin of beans is to make good your escape as an independent traveller, carrying only hand baggage. That way, you can be installed in your hotel room long before the last wayward passenger has collected his errant bag and been shepherd from the wrong airport exit to the right tour bus. Independently, touchdown to hotel by taxi was effortless.

As a packaged person, the bus meandered through Benidorm pausing at miscellaneous hotels, equally aggravating was the "welcome commentary" by the resort rep; when I first went on a Thomson package in 1980, the opening gambit was "Welcome to Majorca – an island of contrasts", and the script has not improved since then.

In the reverse direction, the balance shifted; the bus driver, who arrived 10 minutes early, actually came and plucked me from the pool. This was less stressful than having to track down the right bus-stop in Alicante, when I decided to offset the extravagance of the taxi and catch the local bus. Winner: independent travel.

The accommodation
In accordance with the freestyle nature of independent travel, I asked the taxi driver to drop me in the main square of Alicante. Two reasons: the Hotel Gran Sol is not a pretty sight but has a close-to-the-action site, a block south of the square. A comfortable room cost £20 per night.

The Eva Mar apartment block in Benidorm is much bigger and much uglier, but the people who run it are equally welcoming. The view from the 11th-floor balcony – whence, local legend has it,

a double bed was hurled last summer – is mostly of other thin concrete blocks poking into the brochure-blue sky. "Planning regulations" and "Benidorm" do not regularly feature in the same sentence. That body of water in the far distance is the Mediterranean; proximity to the beach is not always a feature of rock-bottom package holidays.

Winner: independence – but earlier this month the Gran Sol closed for three months' refurbishment.

The law
Buying a package brings you an astonishing degree of consumer protection, far beyond getting your money back if the operator goes out of business. Had I tripped over a wonky pavement in Benidorm, injured myself, and decided to sue the local authority, Thomson would have stumped up the first £5,000 of my legal bill. Independently, booking a flight separately from a room, means the benevolent Package Travel Regulations do not apply.

Winner: package, by a knock-out (incurred while tripping over pavement?).

The price
Independently, I found a real bargain flight for £79 return (a more usual figure would be around £150). Two nights in the Gran Sol added £40, and trans-

fers added £15. Total, without a modest amount of spending money, £134. A bargain – of sorts.

The good news about the two-night package was that it was a real loss-leader: just £85.

The bad news was that an "under-occupancy supplement" of £7.50 was charged because I preferred not to share a small apartment with three other people.

The almost unbelievably fortunate follow-up was that thanks to Thomson's "fluid pricing" strategy, designed to reward early bookers, £50 was knocked off the price. Result: a Mediterranean holiday for a grand total of £42.50.

My travel agent was remarkably sanguine about earning just £4.25 commission on the deal, representing 10 per cent of the total. The British and Spanish governments collected £6.25 between them, which leaves Messrs Thomson with just £32 to pay for return flights, transfers and accommodation. The secret was to book at the cusp of the season: when the winter flight schedule ends and the summer timetable begins, tour operators are left with uncomfortable combinations of rooms and seats, which they sell off for whatever they can get.

Overall winner: the package. And Benidorm.

Safe and sound at Camp Cancún

Tour operators' concern for safety can go too far, writes Candida Lloyd

As a cheap method of getting to Mexico last December, I decided to take up an Airtours offer of a package holiday to Cancún for £450. As part of the bargain I was entitled to an introductory talk by the tour company's enthusiastic reps. Along with a group of more than 100 British tourists, I listened to lengthy

descriptions of the resort's attractions and organised trips. I'm sure the performance was typical of hundreds of package holiday introductory talks.

After my two weeks in Cancún I was left with the distinct feeling that the travel company's main aim was to keep all its charges wrapped up in cotton wool. Meanwhile, the wary spent their excess cash on Airtours' own trips, and at the company-recommended clubs and bars. The reps have a difficult job – they want to ensure everyone has a good time. They may also feel that if tourists choose to stay in a mega US-style resort like Cancún they are not looking for adventure.

But I don't think that was

the whole picture. Why suggest, for example, that you were taking a risk using the local bus system or the "bone-shaker" as they called it. Costing a few pence to go anywhere and running every couple of minutes 24 hours a day, it was far superior to anything London has to offer. Similarly, the coach system for trips further afield was condemned with a story about how some holidaymakers were left stranded in the middle of nowhere by an ignorant driver who had gone off for his dinner.

In reality, the coach system is superb. The luxury coaches – air conditioning, videos, toilets, and even some with free drinks – cost about a pound for every hour of

travel. They went regularly to every possible part of the country. There were no hold-ups, break-downs or difficulties in getting information and seats.

Local restaurants and visits to the less touristy parts of Cancún were also discouraged. Instead, recommendations were made for organised tours of poor people in poor housing, while pub crawls mainly targeted American-style bars. The general impression given was to be wary of all things local and stick with what you know. I'm sure that for many people this was what they came for, but more timid folk would surely have been frightened into accepting the Airtours outlook of the world.

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Lang: sees Britain joining European Monetary Union

Warm welcome in France for Blair

Joanna Lee
Paris

Excitement is mounting in the tiny French village of Saint-Martin-d'Oydes as residents prepare to welcome the Prime Minister, his wife, Cherie, and their three children. The family will stay in the 12th century country house belonging to the judge David Keene QC, and the French Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin will be staying around 20 miles away. It is likely that the two prime ministers will meet

informally some time next week.

Mr Blair will also be able to bask in the praise and support of the French Socialists, who were delighted by his electoral victory. Speaking from his holiday home in the southern region of Bouches-du-Rhône, Jack Lang, the President of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Socialist MP and former Minister of Culture during the Mitterrand years, will not hear a bad word said against the British Prime Minister. "The new Labour government has a fresh,

young spirit about it that shows great promise for the future," he said.

"Although I found the electoral campaign somewhat reserved and cautious, I have been very impressed by the proposals of the Government over the last three months, particularly regarding decentralisation, health and education." Mr Lang draws parallels between France in 1981 and Britain today. In 1981, President Mitterrand became the first ever Socialist president and ap-

pointed the first left-wing government for over two decades. He remained in power for 14 years, leading a left wing government for ten of those.

"The mood of both the Government and the people during this period in France was very similar to that in Britain today. People had a new confidence and enthusiasm, as well as a strong sense of liberation. This atmosphere is very important if the Government is to be successful."

The French Socialist party of today has not modernised as

much as New Labour has. Mr Jospin's approach is still far more interventionist, compared with Mr Blair's more liberal approach. But Mr Lang explains that "this difference in policy is due more to a difference in culture and tradition, than to a fundamental difference in ideology." He is keen to underline the two leaders' "common interest in human rights and social causes, as well as a growing, dynamic economy."

Mr Lang is equally enthusiastic about the Labour govern-

ment's foreign policy. "It is positive, constructive and progressive, incorporating an international humanitarian vision". Mr Lang has even written to the French foreign and defence ministers, Hubert Vedrine and Alain Richard, advising them to follow Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook's lead in banning arms sales to countries with poor human rights records.

Mr Lang believes that Mr Blair's European policy is in keeping with British politics. However, he is convinced that

the single currency will go ahead as planned in 1999, and he also believes that Britain will enter at some stage, although probably not in the first round. "If the Government and the people need more time, so be it. It is better that Britain enters in her own time and of her own accord, rather than being forced... Mr Blair is serious and attentive in his approach to European affairs and I believe that he will come to the right decision." - that Britain is better off in than out.

Striking a blow for tolerance in Memphis, the city of the Kings

David Osborne
Memphis

There are ten of us on the forecourt of what was once the Lorraine Motel, on tiny Mulberry Street in downtown Memphis. You would think there would be more of us. These days it is the National Civil Rights Museum and above us is Room 306 and the balcony where on 4 April 1968, Dr Martin Luther King was shot dead.

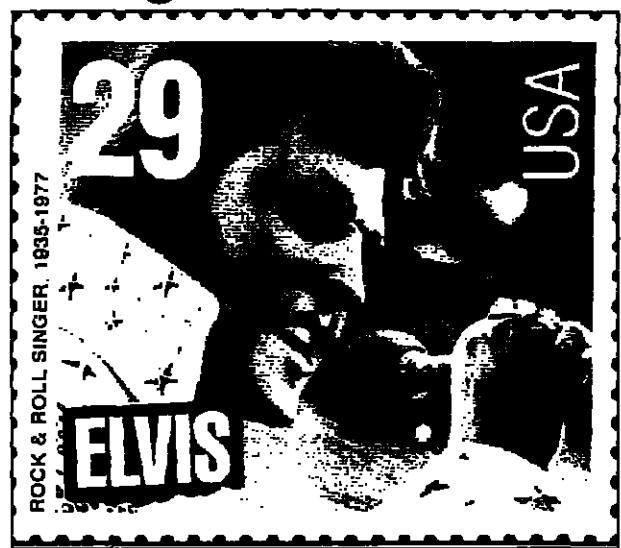
The hordes visiting Memphis this week are interested in another king altogether. It is only five blocks from here to the newly-opened Elvis Presley Memphis restaurant on Beale Street, where, at five in the afternoon, the fans are cranking behind the velvet ropes to wait an hour for a table inside.

The contrast - the nearly vacant tarmac at the Lorraine versus the crush at the restaurant and even more at Presley's Graceland home - invites a snobbish reaction. What are they doing flocking to honour an entertainer who died fat and feckless when they could be here learning about the greatest civil rights leader America ever had?

Because these people are on holiday. Because eating deep-fried peanut butter - one of the king's favourites - is a giggle. Because pecking at the gold-leaf wash basins aboard the Elvis' private jetliner, the Lisa Marie, at Graceland is fun. Because Dr King could sermonise but could not sing. And because today is 20 years since Elvis' death.

And maybe because they know that Elvis mattered also. Who influenced America more in the second half of the century, King or the King?

Ask the Nixon Library which photograph is most requested by its visitors - the President with Presley. Ask the US Post Office which of its commemorative stamps has outsold all others - the 1993 Elvis stamp. Ask RCA Records who is the



The Presley legacy

Elvis Presley's first 10 number ones in the UK:
All Shook Up - June 1957
Jailhouse Rock - Jan '58
One Night - Jan '58
A Fool Such As I - April '58
It's Now Or Never - Oct '58
Are You Lonesome Tonight? - Jan '61
Wooden Heart - Mar '61
Wild In The Country - Aug '61
Rock-A-Hula Baby - Jan '62

biggest-selling artist of all time

Elvis, of course. It may be a stretch to say that Elvis was the father of Rock and Roll. What about Louis Jordan or Bill Haley before him? But Presley's musical legacy is unanswerable. He borrowed the rhythm and blues sound that had been the domain of mostly black artists, added inspiration from gospel and country, and translated it into rock and roll for the mainstream, black and white.

Wink Martindale, a TV game show host today, this week reminisced about the evening in July 1954 when Sam Phillips of Sun Records came into the Memphis radio station where he worked with the first Elvis single ever, *That's Alright Mama*, and on the flip side, *Blue Moon*. Until then, the station's ratings had depended on giving black music to its white teenage audience.

When they heard the record, "everyone thought Elvis was black", Martindale remembered. "We immediately knew that something really special was happening, but not one of us understood that the course of popular music was being literally changed overnight."

The delivery of the black beat to the white population was arguably as great a gift to racial integration as any achieved by Dr King. It is ironic then, that almost all of those mobbing the Graceland shrine are white.

More seminal was the impact on buttoned-down fifties America of Elvis' sexually-charged, pelvis-grinding stage performances, especially his early appearances on television. So deep was the shock over his gyrations and his phallic guitar gesturing, that by his fourth appearance on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, viewers were only allowed to see him from the waist up.

"Elvis was the first public controversy of the silent, fifties generation," says John Bakker Professor at the University Of Memphis and an Elvis scholar. "People, until then, had not argued about anything, not even about Korea. And from Elvis came the seeds of the social and cultural revolution that hit America in the sixties."

Hard to fathom, however, is the power of Elvis mania today. His record sales have hit a billion and a half and are accelerating. Elvis Presley Enterprises (EPE), which owns

Graceland and the Presley image, is a multi-million-dollar concern that has plans for a casino and hotel at Graceland and for a world-wide chain of Elvis restaurants. London should have one soon.

What is driving the craze? Is it EPE, which works so hard to protect Elvis from negative publicity - there will, for instance, never be a video of his last concert tour when his once-handsome features had become marshmallow. Conversely, is it the Elvis muck-raking of the tabloid media? Or the "Elvis lives" nut-cases who keep seeing him at their supermarkets? Or the legion of Elvis lookalikes the world over?

Or is it, simply, the voice? Spare a thought, meanwhile, for Dr King. The 30th anniversary of his death is just nine months away. What kind of baloney will that get? Not much of a one to judge by the small table offering Civil Rights Museum souvenirs at Memphis Airport gift shop this week. Edged by the nearby monster Elvis display, it has a small plastic sign on it that reads: "Clearance Sale".

Leading article, page 13



Good rockin' tonight: Presley onstage in Tupelo, Mississippi in 1956, more than two decades before his death. Above, one of 1993 postage stamps that have been America's best-selling ever. Photograph: Jean Cummings

significant shorts

Two killed as gunmen ambush Bosnian Muslims

Two Bosnian Muslims were killed and another was wounded by automatic gunfire in eastern Bosnia, Muslim-Croat federation authorities said. The shooting took place near a former front line in a village inhabited by Serbs before the 1992-95 Bosnian war, the federation said. The federation interior ministry said the Muslims were ambushed by gunmen as they drove to cut firewood in the Sapna region. Reuters - Sarajevo

Albania peace verdict

The UN Security Council has registered the end of a peace-keeping mission it authorised for Albania. In a statement read at a formal meeting after hours of scripted speeches, the council said the mandate of the 7,000-strong Italian-led force had been fulfilled successfully but that the Albanian people and leaders had primary responsibility for the future of their country. Reuters - New York

Hong Kong's moist record

The first eight months of this year have been Hong Kong's wettest period in 113 years, since records began in 1884, weather experts said. During the period 2,611.3mm of rain was recorded, breaking the record of 2,610.4 mm set in 1973. Reuters - Hong Kong

Hungarian challenge

The Hungarian Prime Minister, Gyula Horn, challenged his Slovak counterpart, Vladimir Meciar, to end delays in safeguarding the rights of Slovakia's 500,000 ethnic Hungarians. After discussing with Mr Meciar a nine-point Hungarian plan to improve relations between the countries, Mr Horn said responsibility for ending tension lay squarely with the Slovak government. Reuters - Gyor

A quiet end

A matron allegedly confessed to killing at least 18 patients so that she would not be disturbed at night and then jumped from a third-storey room in a suicide attempt. Aida Nur el-Din, 42, allegedly killed the patients with drugs stolen from the hospital dispensary, the *Egyptian Gazette* said. AP - Cairo

First children join Hong Kong fathers

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

The first batch of Chinese-born children entitled to live in Hong Kong under a controversial new scheme entered the territory yesterday clutching hurriedly issued certificates of entitlement.

Ranging in age from two years old to twenty-one, the 133 immigrants passed across the

border at Lowu to what their parents hope will be a more prosperous future. They are among more than 66,000 offspring who have the right to live in Hong Kong under its new mini-constitution, the Basic Law. This says any child with a Hong Kong resident as a parent is entitled to live in the territory.

The large numbers of men crossing the border from Hong Kong has ensured the birth of

even larger numbers of children who, under British rule, had no automatic right to live there.

Having given these children new rights, the incoming government got cold feet, fearing that the social services and schools would be swamped with hordes of Chinese-born youngsters. One of its first acts was to introduce the certificate of entitlement to stem the influx. Although it is not admitted,

the purpose of the scheme is to use the slow grinding wheels of Chinese bureaucracy to decelerate the process of application for residence. However, a great many children who were smuggled into Hong Kong under British rule put a spanner in the works by giving themselves up to the authorities, thinking that now they would be able to remain with legal status. This proved to be a mistake

because the government adopted a hard line and started rounding them up for deportation. The deportations have been stopped by a rush of court challenges to be heard next month, which are shaping up to be a constitutional battle led by Hong Kong's top lawyers who argue that the government is breaching its own constitution and undermining the rule of law. The government says no fun-

damental rights are being taken away but the exercise of them is being curtailed by the practical need to verify the status of those applying to live in Hong Kong. These arguments passed over the heads of the children who arrived yesterday. Most looked rather bewildered by the fuss which greeted their arrival. Others must be wondering what it will be like to live with fathers they hardly know.

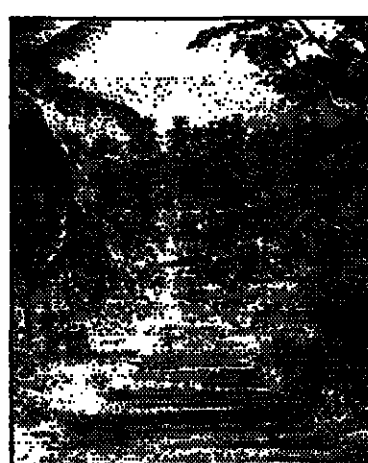
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A black and white photograph showing the front of a vehicle. The focus is on the grille, which features the 'DODGE' logo in the center. Above the grille is a hood ornament. Below the grille is a Tennessee license plate that reads 'ELIOT'. The license plate also has 'TENNESSEE' at the top and 'GOSFORD' at the bottom. The image is grainy and appears to be a photocopy.

Elvis may (or may not) be dead, but Memphis tills keep a' shakin' PHOTOGRAPHS: GRAHAM TROTT/KATZ

Jennifer Rodger

Washing facilities for perspiring hikers comprise a basin of hot water carried from the kitchen through a field of friendly sheep.

These are the words of Teresa Allan, who died last weekend. Besides being a contributor to these pages, Teresa was a dear friend. She will be sadly missed.

[illegible]

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Far from the maddening crowd

Michael Hanlon strides out from Swanage at the start of the Dorset coast path ...

At Poole Harbour, England's bungalow coast gives way to the rambling of the South-west. For 250 miles west, there is a path which leads all the way to Land's End. Our ambitions were not so great – merely to take in the first few miles of Dorset shoreline along the precipitous Purbeck cliffs, have a dip in the briny and hopefully a pint or two in one of the many excellent pubs.

We started in Corfe Castle, a photogenic village consisting of a conical hill topped by the eponymous ruin, and a couple of hundred outrageously pretty limestone cottages, many doing sterling service as tea shops and craft emporia. My companion, Twiglet, an Irish Terrier, spotted a shop selling home-made filled pastries, and we stocked up on a freshly baked pork pie.

After the pie shop, to the Jurassic era. The tiny town museum is something of a glass-fronted showcase for the usual suspects – old paraffin lamps and the like – but it also contains a perfectly preserved set of dinosaur footprints, excavated from a stratum found in a nearby quarry. The experience showed that in aeons past, Dorset, or whatever Pangean shore it was then, was the Serengeti of the Saurian world.

The first part of our walk was in fact steam-powered. A preserved railway (dogs travel free) connects Corfe to Swanage, an odd resort some six miles away. It is odd because it faces east, the wrong direction; the sun is always where you least expect it to be. We headed out, climbing the grassy downlands that start at the car park near the derelict pier.

Here the South West Coast Path is confusingly marked. In some places a butterfly points the way. A hundred yards on, Queen Victoria urges you forward. Eventually the Empress takes a bow and the serious walking begins, indicated by an acorn. Now the cliffs are steep and severe. Every now and then we passed a climber, all ropes and tackle and chalky hands.

Five or so miles on, Seacombe Cliff looked a good bet for a swim. And sure enough, after some slippery clambering, a less than graceful immersion was experienced. The water, clean as anywhere, was dark and deep and not too cold. Twiglet sat on the rocks, eating her share of our pork pie lunch.

At one end of the cove is a sea-filled cave, cutting

more than 100ft into the low cliffs. Great for exploring by boat, but a bit spooky for swimming, the tips of kelp fronds just poking above the surface, threatening unpleasant submarine leg tangling and slipperiness.

Man and dog cannot survive on pork pie alone, so we struck north, up a steep hill to Worth Matravers in search of a pub. From a distance, The Square and Compass beckoned. As we strode across the garden, thoughts of foaming tankards and sandwiches were uppermost in my mind. But our path was blocked by a surly youth. "We're closed mate". It was half past three, the sun was burning, and a good day's takings' worth of disappointed customers were milling around. The youth sped off on his motorbike. Only in England.

So, on to Kingston. Even prettier than Worth, Kingston lies a couple of miles further inland. This ancient village boasts a fairy-tale Gothic church, with patterned round towers. Kingston's pub, the Scott Arms, was willing to serve us beer and food at the ungodly hour of 5pm. While a tired dog slurped her half of ale, her owner put away a pint and a pound of cheese and pickle sandwiches, and contemplated the final two miles to Corfe. At least it was downhill all the way.

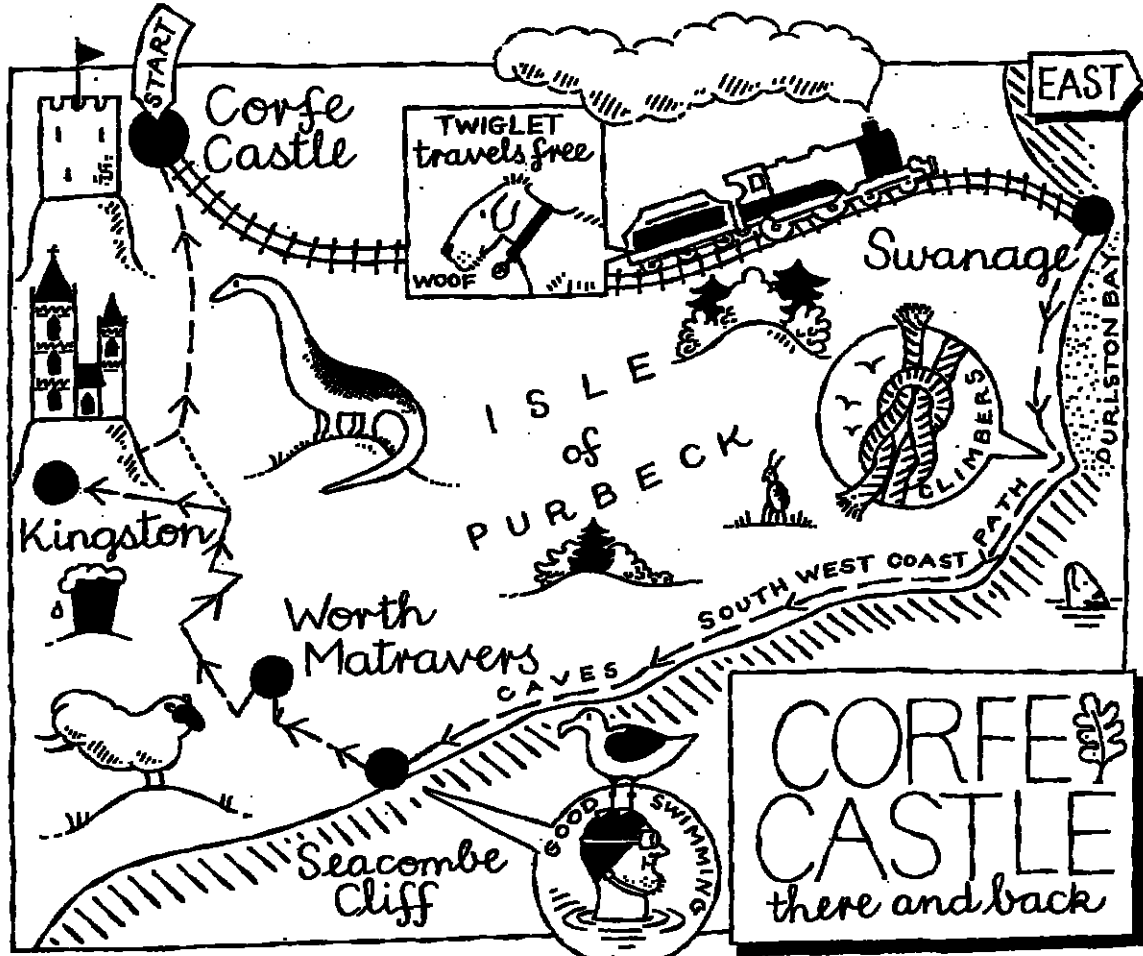
Directions

From Corfe take the steam railway to Swanage (two per hour, 35 minutes, £3 adults, £2 children, dogs free). At Swanage, walk to the south end of the seafront and turn right over the grassy hill by the pier. From here the coast path is fairly well marked.

We walked four miles to Seacombe Cliff, and turned inland here where a marked path leads to Worth Matravers. Dinosaur footprints can be seen in situ at Acton, a couple of miles back on the Priest's Road, an inland path running parallel to the SWCP.

From Worth, there is no clear path to Kingston. The marked track from Kingston to Corfe starts opposite the churchyard near the Scott Arms. Head down the hill, turn right and then left through a signed gap in the fence. The path here has been obscured, but it is easy to find your way across the fields and tumuli to Corfe.

Length of walk: about nine miles
Maps: Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Outdoor Leisure map 15, Purbeck & South Dorset.



Rich and strange: marine life on show along the Cobb, below

PHOTOGRAPH: APEX

Cordial Lyme

... and at the other end of the county Catherine Stebbings finds dinosaurs, squids and trams

It would be difficult to get lost in Lyme Regis – everything tumbles down the hill towards the sea. Yet Dorset's most westerly town is well protected from the ravages of ocean waves. Below the lively high street, a long promenade forms the main causeway from the town to the Cobb, the curving harbour wall that dates back to the 13th century. This massive structure has a mythic quality that has fascinated writers and artists for centuries. But although Jane Austen and John Fowles put Lyme on the literary map – with *Persuasion* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* respectively – the town has too much self-respect and too much to offer to present you with Regency dresses or Meryl Streep's hooded face around each corner.

This engaging resort is well equipped with entertainments – including a dinosaur museum and an intriguing marine exhibition area along the Cobb. In addition, there's always the fascination of the British seaside: along the promenade sunbathers lounge on hired deckchairs watching bathers in the sea. Shops overflowing with buckets and spades are squeezed between the smarter B&Bs. A drop down, and you find yourself on the beach – patches of golden sand interspersed by large stretches of pebbles along the seafront.

And pebbly beaches sprawl along the coast from Lyme. There are rich pickings here: fossil hunters search among rocks or dig away at the foot of the charcoal-grey cliffs. Meanwhile swimmers brave the freezing waters, children mess about in bobbing boats and windsurfers skim out to sea.

The visitors

Catherine Stebbings, writer, and her husband Jonathan, teacher, took their daughters, Imogen, seven, Polly, five and Claudia, three.

Catherine: We had a wonderful, if exhausting day. It was lovely not to be confined to the beach all day. We visited Dinosaurland, went fossil hunting, picnicked on the beach, popped into the marine aquarium, looked around the shops and still had time for a tram ride through the countryside.

Jonathan: I don't like beaches: they are cold, wet and sandy, but it's

important to make the effort for the children. Lyme is brilliant because it is so varied. We could break up the day between sunbathing and sand castle making with fossil hunting, museum visiting and browsing around the shops in the town. There is always something going on in Lyme, whether it's the town band playing on the parade, sand games for children, or guided walks. I would love to come back without children to walk the famous Undercliff from Lyme to Seaton and perhaps to tackle the coastal walk over Golden Cap.

We took the tram ride from Colyton, just 15 minutes' drive away, to Seaton, which was a lovely way to enjoy the countryside. By the end of the day I felt foolishly enough to enter the annual greasy pole competition, only to be bopped into the murky depths of the harbour.

Imogen: I liked the museums most. We went to the dinosaur museum and saw lots of fossils and models of dinosaurs and some living animals, like an iguana and a tortoise. I did a fun shoot and the man gave me a special stone as a prize. Afterwards we went fossil hunting on the pebbly beach and I found some ammonites like the ones in the museum. It is

really exciting to find something millions of years old.

We had a picnic on the Cobb then went to the marine museum full of fish from the harbour. There was a lovely, rusty-coloured octopus moving slowly over the rocks, gripping with his legs then suddenly swooping away.

Polly: Lyme Regis is a lovely town with lots of old buildings and little shops selling buckets and spades. The sea was green-blue and there were hills in the distance. There was a nice sandy beach with lots of people on it and we couldn't take the dog there so we went on the little beach in the Cobb. I didn't go into the sea because it was too cold.

I enjoyed the ride on the tram. We saw squirrels and ducks on the line and herons fishing in the river. Mummy saw a kingfisher.

Claudia: I like the seaside. I made lots of sand castles and got very dirty. Daddy fell in the sea with a big splash.

The deal

Tourist Information: Church St (01297 442138) for accommodation and copies of *What's on in Lyme Regis*.

Parking: Use the well signposted Park and Rides as there is little parking in Lyme; small pay-and-display car parks by the Cobb and at the top and bottom of the High Street. Access: narrow pavements and steep hills in the town make walking with children difficult. Easy access along the parade and Cobb and on to the sandy harbour beach. Dogs are not allowed on the harbour beach.

Museums: Dinosaurland is a small exhibition explaining the history of prehistoric earth and the fossilised forms left behind. Well explained and nicely low key. Open daily 10am-5pm (later in summer); adults £3.20, children £1.90, OAPs £2.90. Marine Aquarium & Cobb History is a charming small museum showing live exhibits brought in by local fishermen. Everything is returned to the sea at the end of the season. Open 10am-late, adults £1.20, children five-to-16 70p, OAPs £1.

Tram rides on classic trams run daily every 20 mins. Round trips 50 mins. Adults £4.20, children £2.40, OAPs £3.40.



It is not every day that this household receives a telephone call from Calcutta – but here was important news. My friend Billy Arjan Singh, sounding unusually animated, reported that the DNA test done on the tiger hairs shown, with more than 90 per cent certainty, the presence of Siberian genes.

A Siberian tiger in an Indian jungle? It sounds like a case for Sherlock Holmes, and indeed the saga of Tara the tigress, if not exactly a mystery, has all the elements of a first-class adventure yarn.

Billy, I should explain, is now in his late seventies, and the Grand Old Man of big-cat conservation, a bachelor living on the fringe of the jungle in a house which he himself designed. It was he who, in 1969, proposed the ban on shooting tigers for sport in India, and he who suggested that the tiger should be adopted as the country's national animal.

In 1972 and 1973 he was much involved with the launch of Project Tiger, designed to save the species from extinction, and his advocacy led to the creation of the Dudhwa National Park, a 200-square mile forest sanctuary near his home on the border with Nepal.

Project Tiger was initiated in 1973, with nine reserves set aside. But Billy saw at once that the scheme had a fatal flaw.



Duff Hart-Davis

A Siberian tiger in an Indian jungle? The saga of Tara the tigress has all the elements of a first-class adventure yarn

Scientists from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature suggested that a population of 300 tigers, in an area of between 2,000 and 3,000 square miles, was the minimum needed in any one gene pool to preserve the species in perpetuity – and none of the new reserves was anything like that large. Moreover, the new national parks were so widely scattered that tigers could not move from one park to another.

Thus, even if they survived the depredations of poachers and angry farmers in the short term, they would eventually die out owing to the effects of inbreeding.

Billy conceived the idea that he would rear a zoo-bred cub and return it to the wild, thus demonstrating that artificial restocking was possible, and at the same time refreshing the gene pool at Dudhwa.

In October 1975 he obtained permission from the prime minister, Indira Gandhi – a good friend of his, and of conservation in general – and travelled to England to collect a female cub from Twycross Zoo, in Leicestershire.

This animal, originally called Jane, subsequently renamed Tara, dominated the next dozen years of his life. He was as nearly in love with the tigress as it is possible for any man to be, and he defended her interests with

passionate intensity. He knew from the start that she was not a pure Bengal tiger, but had a Siberian strain in her ancestry. Yet he considered this genetic diversity to be all the better for his experiment.

Tara grew up in and around his house on the edge of the jungle, never restrained or confined, and at the age of two she did what he had always said she would – she returned to the wild. In the forest she mated with one or more wild tigers, and produced at least four families of cubs.

Purely as a reintroduction, the project was a triumphant success. Yet it attracted bitter enmity from bureaucrats the world over, who bombarded Billy with letters claiming that he had done irreparable damage by releasing a "genetic cocktail" into the jungle. In October 1981, for instance, he received a letter from the director of Project Tiger in Delhi which said that "it will be a catastrophe of the highest order genetically if our breed of tigers is contaminated by one of impure lineage".

Another broadside from the same source said: "We will have to consider Tara's elimination, as well as that of her cocktail progeny." Billy replied that any elimination would take place over his dead body – but in any case he knew that the threat was futile, since only he could find or identify the tigers in dispute.

A different claim, vociferously

repeated, was that Tara had become a man-eater. When tigers began killing people in Billy's district, Khery, she was immediately blamed. "It's that bloody tiger of yours," park officials assured him. Because she had been brought up with humans, they said, she did not steer clear of them as normal tigers do.

Animosities reached an all-time high when the hostile park director shot an animal which he then announced was the hated Tara, and he exhibited the stuffed body in his house. Billy himself was called upon to kill

several man-eaters and every time he dreaded that the doomed animal would turn out to be his. But this never happened. The real Tara remained alive and well in the jungle.

Fast-forward, past innumerable blazing rows, to the Nineties. In 1992, to use Billy's haunting phrase, "Tara passed from the range." But in 1995 he began to see an extraordinarily handsome young male tiger which bore all the characteristics of Siberian stock: light colouring overall, wide stripes, large head, and a lot of

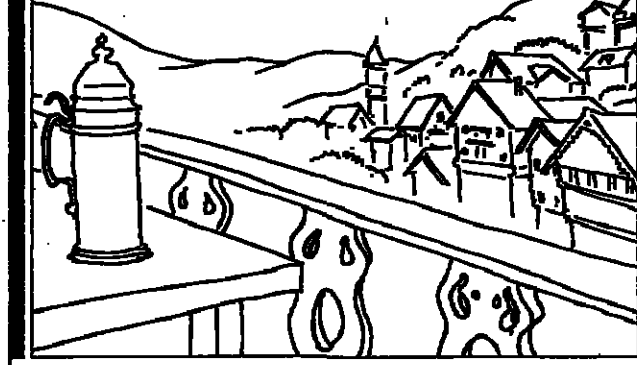
white about the cheeks and forehead.

He felt certain that there was only one source from which such markings could have derived: Tara's Siberian ancestors.

Immensely excited, he collected hairs from a spot on which the young male had been rolling, and sent them off for analysis.

Now, far from being repentant, he is thrilled to have proof that his genetic cocktail has borne fruit, and he remains convinced, in spite of furious opposition from purists, that cross-fertilisation must be the way ahead.

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A dilemma for the arts elite: Middle Britain knows just what it likes



Worth the wait: more than 5,000 visitors a day flocked to the Tate Gallery, in London, to see 'The Large Bathers' (detail below, left) and other Cezanne paintings, but works by the German impressionist Lovis Corinth (detail from his 'The Family of the Painter Rumpf', below, right) proved less popular. Photograph: Nick Turpin



1. Queues at Tate shrink without a star name



Ian Burrell

Britain's art lovers are flocking to view well-known paintings but shun less famous or more challenging works. The Tate Gallery yesterday claimed its policy of exhibiting lesser known artists was responsible for attendance figures plummeting by more than half a million in a year.

Official figures provided to an MP by arts minister Mark Fisher show that the number of visitors to the three Tate galleries in London, Liverpool and Cornwall, fell by nearly a quarter in the year to April.

The Tate Gallery at Millbank in London, where numbers fell by 550,000 to 1,830,000, a decrease of more than 23 per cent, denied that the fall was evidence that the gallery had reached its peak.

The gallery, which received

£18.7m from the National Lottery earlier this year, said it could not put on "blockbuster" exhibitions all the time and had a duty to show "discovery exhibitions". Damien Whitmore, spokesman for the Tate, said: "You cannot have Picasso every three months or you would not be doing your job."

"Yes, you want shows like Cezanne and Picasso which do reach new audiences but you have got to have shows which are about discovery, introducing new artists and new ideas."

Last February, the gallery

staged "Cezanne at the Tate", an exhibition of nearly 100 paintings which was billed as "the most important survey of Cezanne's work for nearly 60 years", and attracted 400,000 to Millbank.

In fact, the exhibition straddled the financial year and a third of the Cezanne visitors are included in last year's figures. The difference in attendance accounted for some 150,000 of the 550,000 visitor shortfall in the Tate's centenary year.

During the year to April, the Tate has featured exhibitions by

Leon Kossoff, one of the most important British artists of the post-war period (only 22,000 visitors and the least successful Tate exhibition for seven years), and Lovis Corinth, a pioneer of German Impressionism (29,000). Both exhibitions pulled in less than 400 visitors a day; Cezanne attracted an average of more than 5,000.

The Tate also staged "The Grand Tour", designed to capture the lure of Italy to writers, artists and art lovers during the 18th century and attracted 58,000. It featured works by Battoni, Canaletto and Piranesi.

But it is the overall attendance

figures - provided to Tory MP Sir Patrick Cormack - which are likely to be a disappointment to the Tate director Nicholas Serota. The number of visitors for the three Tate galleries is down by over 161,000 on the average for the past five years. Mr Serota,

who is to oversee the creation of the new Tate Museum of Modern Art, to be built for the millennium in the transformed Bankside power station, had watched annual attendance figures rise markedly since he came to the gallery in 1988, when there were 1,500,000 visitors.

This year's stay-away comes in spite of the determination by Mr Serota and the Tate's trustees not to introduce admission fees for the gallery's permanent collection.

The Tate at St Ives in Cornwall maintained its annual attendance level at 190,000 but the Tate in Liverpool saw a decline of 30,000 to 460,000.

Mr Fisher's figures show, however, that many museums which do charge for general admission are pulling in an increasing number of visitors.

The Natural History Museum in South Kensington enjoyed a rise of more than 24 per cent, while attendance at the nearby Victoria and Albert Museum

rose by 6.8 per cent. The Imperial War Museum in south London was up by 6.5 per cent.

Other major museums which do not charge admission prices were also increasingly popular.

The British Museum had an extra 700,000 visitors and its 6,800,000 annual figure made it the most popular of the national museums and galleries. The National Gallery reported an annual attendance of 5,000,000 last year, which was 500,000 more than 1995.

The Top Ten Tate exhibitions

Cezanne 1996, 5,109 visitors per day
Dali 1990, 3,878
Constable 1976, 3,872
Picasso 1994, 3,617
Pre-Raphaelites 1984, 2,642

David Hockney 1988, 2,474
Picasso 1974, 2,344
Whistler 1994, 1,812
Constable 1991, 1,783
Late Picasso 1988, 1,584

2. CD sales stuck in doldrums for lack of another Pavarotti

Alexandra Williams

Luciano Pavarotti and football are the perfect harmony. But, unfortunately for the record industry, which is experiencing a sharp slump in classical-music sales, the World Cup is only every few years.

By bringing "Nessun Dorma" to the terraces, unlikely buyers were dragged into the realm of classical music and sales peaked.

Recently, however, there has been a dearth of high-profile releases, which has led to plummeting sales.

As a nation which knows exactly what it wants in the compact-disc rack, the industry is having to ferret around for a re-

lease that will whet our conservative tastes in the hope of rescuing the year's sales.

Bill Holland, divisional director of Polygram Classics, said: "As a nation we do tend to be conservative and stick to what's safe. As a record company we have to identify potentially commercial records - easily accessible tunes."

"We're watching all the time for music that's used in films, TV ads and sporting events. Lately there hasn't been the big hit we need but when there's a block-buster it tends to transform the market."

The amount of classical albums sold in the last quarter sank to 2.83 million, a 20.5 per cent decline on the same period of 1996. Value sales slipped to £11.7m, 22 per cent down.

Fiona Maddocks, former editor of BBC Music Magazine, said: "Unless there's a big hit like Gorecki's Symphony Number Three to prop the industry up, and pay for the more obscure things, then sales will fall. The trend is downwards."

The downturn follows a difficult period for the classical market, which revived in the 1980s when consumers bought new compact discs to replace their favourite vinyl recordings, and was buoyed in the early 1990s by the success of the best-selling crossover albums by the violinist Nigel Kennedy and the Three Tenors.

Charles Stewart-Smith,

spokesman for the British Phonographic Industry, said: "The market is like a Yo-Yo and can depend on one or two recordings. And there's also the knock-on effect - when Canto Gregoriano sold well there was interest in other chant music."

In 1990 15.6 million classical albums were sold. In 1992 sales dropped to 12.3 million and last year the figure was 14.7 million. The last quarter, incorporating Christmas sales, is the best-selling chunk of the year, so the industry is keeping its fingers crossed that Kennedy's new album, and October's televising of the Gramophone Awards - the classical version of the Brits - will boost sales.

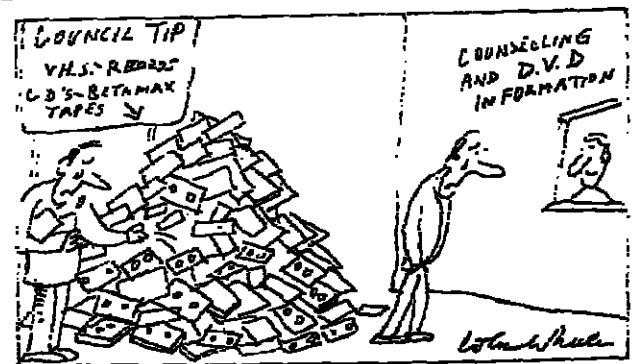
New digital disc will make the videotape as outdated as vinyl

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

It looks like a CD player, it plays discs that look like CDs, but it does far more than just play music. The Christmas present to die for, if you've got as much money as Di or Dodi, is a DVD (Digital Video Disc) player. In a few years, these new hi-fi gadgets could make videotapes as outdated as black vinyl discs.

The CD-sized discs look no different from the music variety, yet they can hold almost 30 times more data - enough for the digitised video of a feature film, with a picture quality far better than videotape, plus soundtracks (in different languages, if required) and music with CD-quality sound. They will also give the same control over film playback as a CD, and never degrade.

Besides that, DVD players - which are already on sale in the US and Japan - will also play your existing music CDs, thus completing the integration of TVs with hi-fi systems. However, such benefits do not come cheap. The starting price of



DVD players in the UK this year will be around £600 - though as with CD players, released more than a decade ago, that price should fall once the market grows.

DVD players are expected on the market either this year or early next year from Philips, Samsung (which launched one here in June), JVC, Sony, Toshiba, Pioneer and Panasonic.

However, the Japanese electronics giants which make most of the DVD players have found themselves caught in a chicken-and-egg game with the American studios which license the

films to go on to discs. There will only be a few films purchasable by Christmas to play on any new DVD player in the UK.

The reason is fears of piracy, which have already delayed the introduction of DVD. Criminals were quick to realise that it is easier to make multiple copies of a CD than a videotape, and each copy is perfect, so setting up digital protection has delayed releases. The film studios have also had to placate the giant video rental chains, which suspect their business - worth about £5bn in the US alone - might disappear.

Similarly, worries that air travel would let people buy DVDs of films in different countries, and so ruin the studios' carefully planned film releases (and attendant merchandising) has led the world to be split into six "zones", where only DVD players and discs from matching zones will work together. China, notorious for counterfeiting, is defined as a zone by itself.

Thus, although you can now fly to the US or Japan and buy a DVD player, it will not play any DVD film disc you buy in this country, and vice-versa, because the discs and players have a technical key-and-lock to prevent it.

One cause for relief is that all DVDs should work in every player and so the video format wars of the 1970s between Betamax and VHS will not be repeated. However, Sony and Philips announced earlier this week that they will not cooperate with other companies attempting to devise a standard for DVDs for computers, which will be able to offer enormous, erasable storage capacity.



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Made in the shade

Gardening workshop:
an ugly shed, little sun ... what can be done?
Anna Pavord advises

We have just moved to a typical Edwardian terraced house in Southfields, south-west London. It has a north-facing garden with an ugly shed and one border with four very small living plants - a rose, lavender, thyme and something with variegated leaves. We do not seem to get much sun in the garden.

My aims are to grow herbs for cooking; to grow apple and pear trees; to hide or cover the ugly shed, possibly with a vine; to get privacy from neighbours on three sides; to have somewhere to sit with a drink at the end of the day; to cover up a double manhole cover on the terrace; to change the paving to something more in keeping with the house; to reduce the amount of grass.

I do not like bright colours and would like the garden to be predominantly white or pale colours. I am keen to have more lavender. I would be grateful for ideas on what likes the shade, and what will grow fairly quickly.



Shadow lands: Tina and Mark Podmore make plans for their north-facing garden

PHOTOGRAPH: EMMA BAOM

Tina and Mark Podmore, who are both in their mid-thirties, lived for 10 years in a Fulham flat before acquiring their first house. They were, said Tina, "desperate for a garden". Although her letter concentrated on the problems, the garden is not the nightmare scenario I had expected. The boundary fences are upright. The levels have not been messed up. The proportions are good, 20ft by 35ft, and the wish list that Tina made was realistic. There was even sun pouring into the garden from the west.

The shed, 9ft by 6ft, is ugly, but not dilapidated. It looked as though it could stand being moved. At the moment it is set against the back boundary. You look over too short a space, straight into its long side and plain, blank window. If the shed were swung round the other way, so that its long side lay along the right-hand boundary, it would not look so dominant. And it would then present an uncluttered, clear face which Mark Podmore could cover with a vine. He's a wine agent and is dead set on the idea of a Chateau Southfield vintage. "Triomphe d'Alsace" might be the vine to use.

It would be prudent to treat the wooden fence with a preservative before the shed is put in its new position. The shed itself could do with some treatment, too. At the moment it is just

brown. But there's no reason why it shouldn't be jazzed up, customised. Cuprinol has a range of coloured wood stains that would be ideal. There's a good holly green and some excellent smudgy sage colours. In addition, half a day's worth of a decent carpenter can transform a bog-standard shed into something with the charm of a miniature Edwardian cricket pavilion, in keeping with the style of the house.

Another wooden fence, sturdy and well made, about 5ft high, makes the left-hand boundary of the garden, with a border running in front of it, the whole length of the garden. It is much too narrow, with room for only a single line of plants.

The fence has nothing growing on it, so I suggested it should be used for the fruit trees. If parallel wires are strung along against the supports, about 1ft apart, the Podmores could grow espalier, fan or cordon apples and pears. Both fruit grow in their neighbours' gardens, so pollination should not be a problem.

Mark Podmore likes espaliers best. They should start with well-grown trees with two parallel sets of branches already trained out, ready to tie to their wires. Since there isn't much space to store fruit, instant eaters may be best. "George Cave" is a delicious, crisp early

apple, ready from the beginning of August. "Ellison's Orange", ripening in September, is one of my favourite apples, strongly scented and wonderfully juicy. As for pears, "Beth" can be picked in September or October and after storing for only one or two weeks it is ready to eat. Three trees will easily fill the space; they can be planted in November or December this year.

I went into the usual spiel about first enriching the soil, breaking up the clay subsoil, etc etc. At this point, people's eyes usually glaze over; Mark Podmore's eyes positively lit up at the thought of hard physical labour. They'd been given seven sacks of Moo-Poo as a house-warming present and he had been looking forward to putting it to the test.

When the backdrop of trees is in place, tied to the supports along the fence, the Podmores will be able to think about the border. It could be at least 6ft wide. Tina Podmore had already started at the end nearest the house, with lavender, blue violas, catmint, variegated iris, variegated euonymus. These are the colours to build on: grey, blue, mauve, purple, white. I would add splashes of lemon yellow to stop the border looking too sleepy.

Some of the herbs in the wish list could be planted among the flowers in the border: variegated sage, rosemary,

the dark purple basil 'Ruffles', bright curled parsley mixed with lobelia in the foreground. The sage and rosemary, being evergreen, would give winter structure, and the border could be finished off along the front with a low-growing lavender, such as 'Munstead'. A double row of bricks laid on edge between border and lawn will give the lavenders flopping space and make it easier to keep a neat edge.

There would be room for Regale lilies, the pretty little delphinium 'Blue Butterfly', agapanthus, some clumps of spotty-leaved pulmonaria, peonies, scillas, 'White Triumphator' tulips, 'Thalia' narcissus, mats of dark-leaved ajuga for winter colour, biennial evening primrose, snowdrops, the stinking hellebore for its wonderful, dark, winter leaves, more violas such as creamy 'Moonshine', blue 'Alata', and 'Andros Gem'. Then perhaps they could add aquilegias of blue, pink and purple, white tobacco flowers for their summer scent and double-flowered *Geranium pratense*.

From inside the kitchen, the Podmores will be able to look directly down the length of the border. It needs something at the end to complete the vista. Being south-facing, the end of the garden gets evening sun. It seems the right place for a seat for the "drink at the end of the day". With the shed

swung round, there will be plenty of space to fit one in.

Aggraffes make a simple arbour 5ft wide which might fit the bill. Tina Podmore, who works for a PR company, fancied something less utilitarian. Mark had seen arbours at the National Trust's garden at Castle Drogo in Devon, covered in something he liked but didn't know the name of. It's Persian ironwood (*Parrotia persica*), an unusual colour. They could add clematis for summer colour.

The terrace is serviceable, but covered in concrete slabs, 18in square, which the Podmores don't like. But the proportion of terrace to the rest of the garden feels exactly right and the level seems sensible, so all they have to do is replace the paving. Since the back of the house is built of buff-yellow London stock brick, I would choose the same brick for the terrace. They should look for new manhole covers, the kind you can infill with bricks to match the surround.

I've already received an invitation to go back and see the garden next year. I'm looking forward to it.

Cuprinol Garden Shades water-resistant wood stain, in 10 colours, costs £7.99 a litre (01373 465151 for stockists).

The last of the University of Oxford Botanic Garden's series of summer garden tours take place this week. On Tuesday, the theme is "The gardener's palette", on how to use colour. On Thursday there is a more general tour of the garden, explaining the work that goes on there. The tours start at 7pm, and cost £5 each. Meet underneath the Danby Arch. For tickets, call Louise Allen on 01865 522399.



CUTTINGS

English Heritage has arranged two tours tomorrow at Audley End, the great Robert Adam house which it owns in Essex. In 1763, the owner, Sir John Griffin, commissioned "Capability" Brown to lay out the landscape round the house. "Brown and the development of the 18th-century garden" is the subject of the tours, which start at 11.30am and 2.30pm. For more details, call 01799 522399.

N Ahmad writes from Reading with a query about lavender 'Barnsley', which he bought in April this year. "It has grown more than 3ft but hasn't produced any flower yet. The same variety in my neighbour's garden is in full bloom. What is wrong with my plant?" Mr Ahmad doesn't say whether his neighbour's plant was put in at the same time as his, or whether it is older. It may simply be that his own plant hasn't got into its stride yet, having been planted only a few months ago. Or it may be growing in a less good situation. Malloes of all kinds like full sun best. They are not generally fussy about soils, but ground that is too rich promotes leaf growth at the expense of flowers. Perhaps Mr Ahmad has been too kind to his 'Barnsley'. Starvation rations from now on.

Weekend work

Tomatoes in containers and growing bags need a regular fortnightly dose of feed rich in potassium which encourages fruit to form successfully. The bush variety 'Tumbler' (Suttons £1.70) does well in grow-bags and pots. If you can set out plants at the beginning of May, you will have fruit by the middle of July.

'Super Marmande' (Marshall's 7p) sown on 18 March has started to set fruit. These are large, meaty tomatoes, strangely-shaped, but superbly-flavoured. Nip out the tops of staked types such as this now. This will encourage the fruit that have already set to swell and ripen.

Over the next month, take cuttings of tender fuchsias and geraniums. Choose strong, healthy shoots for geraniums and crop off the top four inches. Trim the cutting at a point immediately below a leaf joint, remove all mature leaves and any flower buds and pot the cuttings up in a sandy mixture of compost. Do not cover them. Stem cuttings can be taken of hibiscus, hydrangea, kolkwitzia and perovskia or Russian sage (a tall, shrubby catmint which flowers between August and September).

Glyphosate can control fast-growing weeds, but use total weedkillers such as this on the calmest of days when there is no danger of the spray drifting. As an extra precaution, I use an old tin tray as a shield.

Where bindweed is growing amongst other plants, you can untwine it and bundle it into a stiff plastic sack, then spray it inside the sack. The more leaf area Glyphosate covers, the better it works, so, paradoxically, you need to let bindweed grow before you tackle it.

Trample horsetail lightly underfoot before spraying. This bruising is said to increase the rate at which the plant absorbs the herbicide.

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gardening

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Motoring: John Simister swapped his Hillman Imp for a Rolls and spent the day lapping up admiring glances 19

Some swear by vitamins, while others are still in need of enlightenment, writes
Debbie Davies

Before public health recommendations are given on supplements, experts like Dr. Whitehead would need clinical trials to prove their safety and effectiveness. Can we achieve through supplements the benefits from eating a diet rich in fruit and vegetables? Can we replicate in capsules the mirror image—alpha beta structure of micronutri-

Mintel estimates that just less than a third of us have the vitamin bug, taking supplements at least twice a week. Age is an important factor. Around one in five people in their late teens and early twenties take supplements regularly; by the time people reach their late fifties, and age-related disease becomes a reality, this figure doubles. Age also influences why someone takes sup-



Doctors may no longer be consulted, but advertising and PR have become major influences on the market. Expenditure on advertising has risen by 87 per cent over the past four years and relaxation in the rules governing advertising has meant campaigns can target consumers other than the elderly, the parents of growing children and

Seas, by far the biggest player, offers journalists who are writing about supplements free supplies as well as ready-made question and answer sheets and extensive data on the market. This is widely quoted, both by the media and other manufacturers and retailers. This tends to inflate the market, when compared to data from an independent source.

forties, fifties and sixties, with plenty of money to spend and a considerable interest in health and diet issues. Dr Whitehead already knows this is the group of people most likely to take supplements; he also knows it is a group with little or no need to take vitamins, minerals or dietary supplements of any kind in the first place.

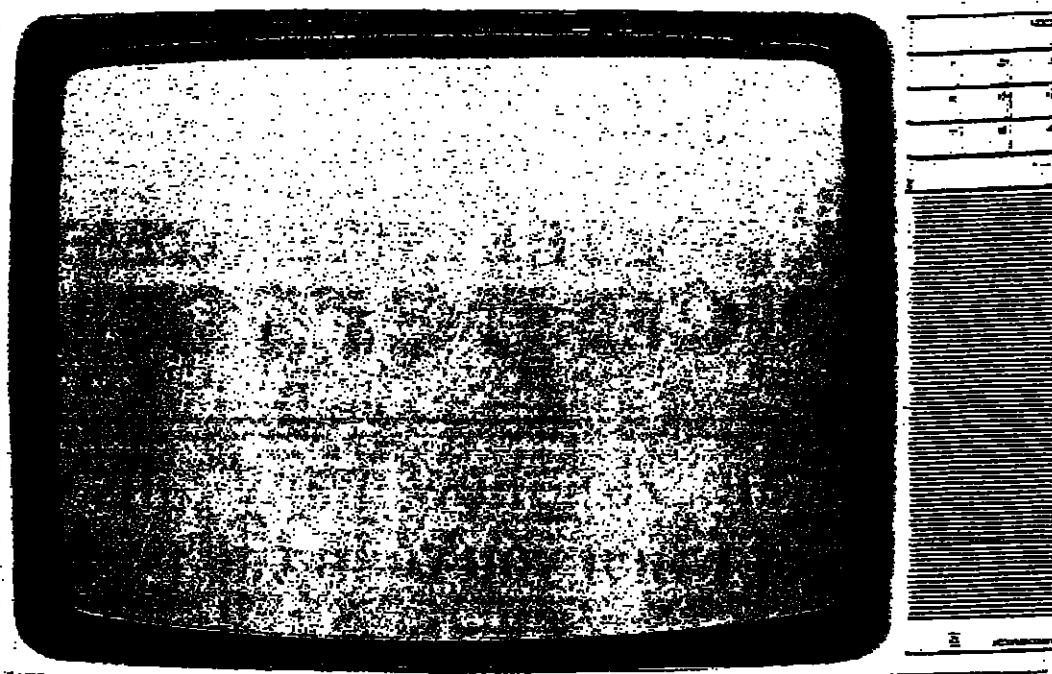
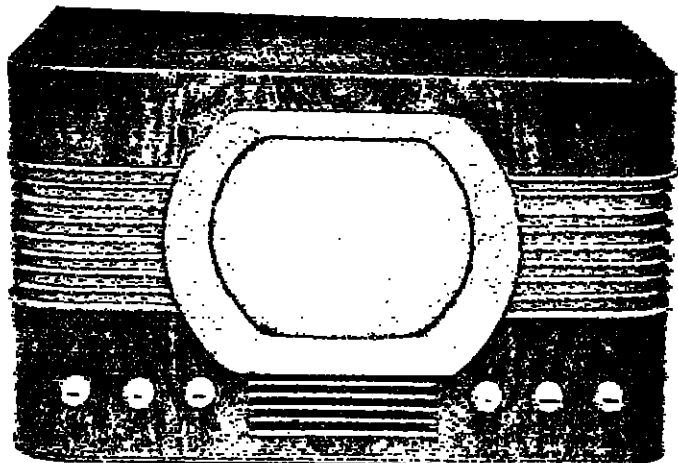
Kids' paddling pool, £14.99, from Woolworth's.
5lb bag of ice, £1.79; 75cl bottle of Campari, £10.85, from
Oddbins.

FAX: 0171 293 2505

[illegible]

هكذا من الامين

'TV as we know it will disappear by the year 2000'. And revolutionary products are on sale now.
Janet Knight reports



Boxing clever: Bang & Olufsen through the ages - from 1950, left, to the BeoVision 3500 colour television of 1973, above, to the revolutionary Beocenter AV5, bottom

End of the line for the tube

That square black box sitting in the corner of your living-room is about to disappear. Soon you'll be watching the news, *Panorama* and *EastEnders* on huge plasma screens so thin that you can hang them on the wall.

Not only will they have unrivalled sound and picture quality, you'll even be able to interact with the characters in your favourite soap. Sounds far-fetched? Well, maybe joining in the milking at *Emmerdale* is pushing it, but the technology to do so is not far away.

To give us a glimpse of what the future holds, Bang & Olufsen have unveiled the Beocenter AV5, which incorporates a flat-screen TV, a radio, a CD player and a powerful loudspeaker system.

With a flick of the remote control you can swivel the screen to wherever you want. When you're ready to watch, an electronic curtain unveils the screen. If your room becomes lighter or darker, the TV automatically adjusts the picture. The CD player has CD-1

(interactive) technology, allowing you to use CD videos and photo CDs, where images are stored on disk rather than in an album.

Of course, all this comes at a price, and at £4,650 it is a hefty one. Not everyone will be rushing out with a chequebook when the new Beocenter goes on sale next month, but most of us will soon own or rent a slim and wide TV screen, because the cathode-ray tubes that make our sets so bulky are being replaced with sleek, 10cm-deep plasma gas screens.

Philips are at the cutting edge of design and technology with their wide-screen 32PW9763C TV (price £1,899). It has full surround sound, crystal-clear pictures, a split screen allowing you to watch two TV programmes side by side, and an electronic TV guide.

Wide screens may be expensive now, but they will get cheaper - just as colour TV sets did in the Fifties, when they began by costing as much as a family car. Already prices are tumbling. Last year, customers paid

£2,000 for a 32in Philips model which now costs £1,400.

As fast as the design is changing, so, too, is the technology. Not content with five terrestrial TV stations and myriad cable and satellite channels, next year we see the arrival of digital TV. This will give access to hundreds of programmes from around the world, via a little box in the living-room. Who will operate it, and how much it will cost, are issues yet to be finalised.

"The TV as we know it will disappear by the year 2000," says Simon Poulter, of Philips. "Instead of 21in-wide sets we will have a variety of 'intelligent' screens up to 42in wide, which we'll use for watching TV, gathering information and accessing our e-mail."

Bang & Olufsen's Malcolm Savill has a clear vision of the future for TV technology. "It's going to be really interactive," he predicts. "The viewer will be able to choose the storyline for a drama and whether they want a sad or happy ending. An interactive disc would also give you more information about what you're watching. If it's a wildlife programme, you may want to ask some questions about the animals, or the country."

He also believes that "The future is in linking the computer and TV, so that you can channel programmes from the Internet... making it an information and entertainment centre capable of gathering material from all over the world."

The only thing blocking interactive TV is a disagreement within the industry as to the type of technology to be adopted as the standard: CD-I or DVD (digital versatile disc format, which looks to be the current favourite).

It's all a far cry from the first flickering black-and-white screens that were switched on when BBC TV was born, at 3pm on 2 November 1936. At that time, fewer than 400 sets could receive the service, via a

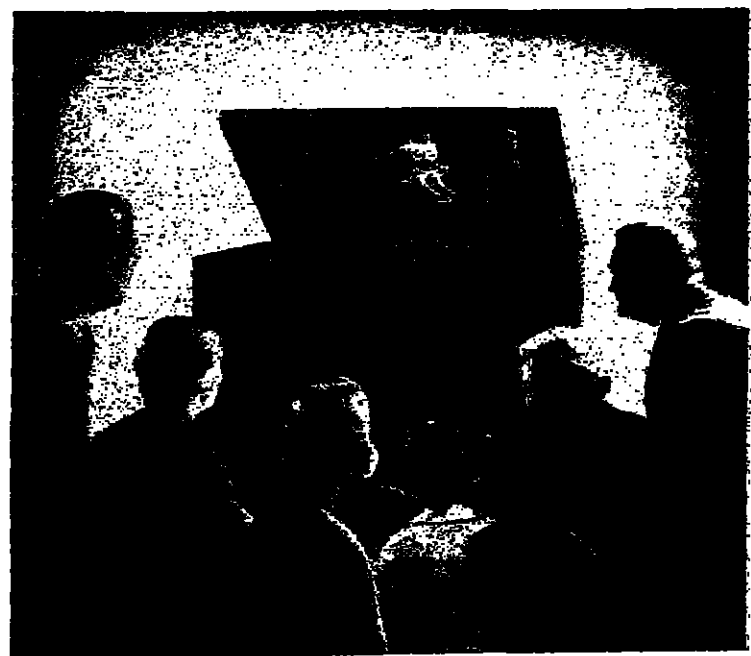
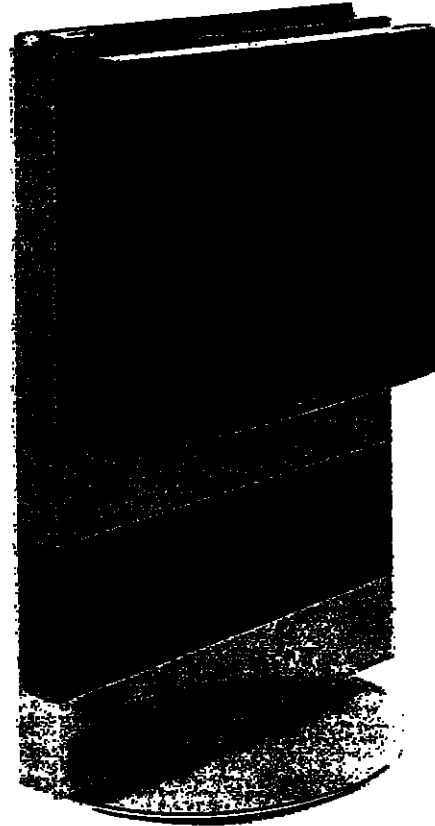
transmitter with a 30-mile radius. A year later, 2,000 families huddled around monster-sized mahogany sets with 10-inch screens, marvelling at history being made with the coronation of George VI.

One of the first sets was HMV's Television Autoradiogram, which cost 120 guineas. By today's standards it could hardly be called user-friendly. The picture was reflected on to a mirror on the TV's lid, while the radio and record player snapped, crackled and popped like a breakfast cereal.

It wasn't long before HMV and Philips were mass-producing them, joined in the Fifties by Bang & Olufsen, whose original sets have become design classics. Sales continued to rise as sets dropped in price, from £60 to as little as £25.

And when Elizabeth was crowned Queen in 1953, 20 million people tuned in. Now 98 per cent of the UK population has a TV set, and one in four households has three.

With 4 million new sets being sold each year, it won't be long before we're all reaching for the popcorn, dimming the lights and spending a night in at the movies.



ADWATCH

Public relations goes nuclear

You can tell it's a corporate ad. The succession of strikingly shot images - a lighted watch, a prism refracting beams of light, lush countryside, spinning ballerinas - seems laden with symbolism.

Another clue lies in the sonorous voice-over, philosophically posing "big questions" concerning science. Or, more specifically, the science of power - nuclear power.

What exactly is being advertised, however, is not so clear. The company behind this new TV campaign, British Nuclear Fuels, is not "selling" nuclear power. BNFL's business is in nuclear fuel reprocessing - one reason why the resulting commercial is abstract rather than being rooted in our everyday use of what nuclear power generates. Nor is it attempting to woo investors. Rather, it is using advertising to inform and shape public debate.

"Obviously because of what they are - a company working in the nuclear industry - there is much unspoken fear about what they do. There is a need for them to enter the debate," says Chris Macleod, managing director of the advertising agency behind the campaign, Collett Dickinson Pearce. "Historically, some have said BNFL shouldn't advertise. But there is an argument counter to that: if others can put an opposing view, why shouldn't they?"

Which is why BNFL feels that the time is now right to put its side of the case.

"As a company, we have a duty to explain clearly what it is we do, to enable the public to make clear judgements about our activities rather than basing their views on misconceptions," a BNFL spokeswoman explains.

Advertising is an important part of this process, along with media events, BNFL's visitors' centre at Sellafield, which regularly attracts 200,000 visitors each year, and a range of educational programmes.

The challenge for the agency was to explain a complex issue - nuclear reprocessing - in an easy-to-understand way that would neither trivialise the issue nor bore the audience.

The answer lies in the image of a match being lit, extinguished and relit. This is a simplistic translation of nuclear reprocessing, whereby you start with 100 per cent used nuclear fuel, reprocess it, and get 97 per cent back to use a second time.

CDP had already produced a previous commercial for BNFL, highlighting the new technology on which the company's business relies. The theme then was: "Where science never sleeps". The new campaign's line remains the same, although the brief was to position BNFL more clearly in people's minds as a world-class scientific company, and to give more detail of exactly what it does.

"It's not a political campaign, but a classic corporate campaign trying to get to opinion-formers who, in turn, will pass the message on to others - the classic cascade effect," Macleod claims. The stylised approach will distance BNFL from the more political end of the nuclear debate, the company hopes. But does it succeed?

Without doubt the ad is stylish, visually intriguing and - in its own way - reassuring. (If the men in white coats have all the answers, what need any of us fear about the potential dangers of nuclear power, it appears to suggest.) However, for those people who are not currently being exposed to the rest of BNFL's carefully honed communications strategy - the educational materials, the visitors' centre, the PR - the impact is hard to gauge. According to one source closely involved with the initiative: "We're currently researching response. In the meantime, the most we can say is we've not received any complaints yet - which, with this subject, is saying something."

BNFL's £4.5m campaign is running for eight weeks. A national poster advertisement continuing the theme launches early in September.

Meg Carter



The time: the school holidays The essentials The place: the garden



It's the middle of the school summer holidays, and like most parents you're probably running out of ideas of how to keep your little darlings occupied for yet another day. It's too late to pack them off to summer camp, so here are some ideas to keep them playing happily for hours in your own back garden:

You can't go wrong with this pop-up tent, which has just been voted the best toy in Britain by 2,000 youngsters. Forget awkward poles and nonsensical instructions, as this design springs up in seconds. It beats 300 other contenders in the 1997 Good Toy Awards. Price £29.95 from TP Activity Toys (call 01 299 827728 for stockists)

No child can resist the lure of a paddling pool, and it's a great way of keeping them entertained while you relax with a good book in the sun. This one, from TP Activity Toys, costs £37.50

Children can help you weed the garden with a bucket and tools set, price £14.95 from The Catalogue at Presents Direct (mail order, 0171-371 7017)

A Challenger climbing frame costs £115, £39.95 for the basketball game set, £89.98 for the slide and £19.95 for the twizzler

Exhausted by all the activity, they can catch their breath in a brightly coloured striped mini-deckchair, price £19.95 from The Catalogue at Presents Direct

No child is capable of sitting still for long, but a radio/recorder may help. It costs £30 from Boots

If it starts to rain, then a children's cooking set, including saucepans, colanders, ladles, jugs, and more, and costs £22.50 from the Conran Shop, should keep them busy in the kitchen

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هكذا من الاصل

من الاموال

In car parks around the country you'll see executives performing tribal routines

I have just enjoyed a week with one of the most beautiful, charming, characterful cars I have ever driven. The Peugeot 406 coupe proves that not all cars have to look the same, or drive the same. It proves that you don't have to be called BMW, Porsche or Mercedes to create a handsome coupe that costs more than £25,000. It also proves that I can come away from a week's motoring loving a car that, for 30 wretched minutes, was about as active as a football-mad couch potato watching live TV coverage of the FA Cup final.

This new R-reg car wasn't the only one giving problems in early August. The RAC and the AA have received a record number of calls this month from owners unable to fathom the complexities of their immobilisers.

I hate immobilisers in general. Sure, the idea is worthy enough: fit a clever electronic circuit breaker into the ignition so that if the wrong guy wants to drive off with your new Wizzo GTI, the engine won't start. Trouble is, for every crook who's immobilised, 1,000 honest owners are stranded. The ancient art of inserting keys into ignition, and turning them to activate engines, is slowly being lost.

Now, increasingly, you have to point key fobs containing magical plippers at cars to open them. Many of the plippers won't work unless they're aimed at exactly the right place. Which explains why, in many executive car parks around Britain, you'll often see besuited executives in front of their new N- or P-reg motors doing strange primeval dances, thumbs and fingers performing odd tribalistic routines. They look like they're paying homage to the God of 20th-century consumerism: the motor car.

Once behind the wheel, the routine doesn't get any easier. Remember when you would simply use the same key that unlocked the car to turn on the ignition and then, once the engine started, you'd drive away?

Nowadays, in many modern cars, such convenience is a thing of the past – as old-fashioned as the notion that banks would respect your privacy, instead of selling your address and details to any two-bit mail-order company.

Now, on many cars, you need to key in a security code, otherwise your car won't start.

On others, you must plip the plipper one more time, to bypass the immobiliser and start the engine. On others, you must plip twice when behind the wheel. Some cars automatically shut down if there is a 30-second delay between unlocking the car and trying to start the ignition; others wait longer. To conclude, the simple art of starting cars is now one of the most arcane and complicated in modern-day motoring. (Obviously these immobilising devices were created by childless bachelors, as any parent knows it takes well over 30 seconds, and often a few minutes, to strap young children into the car before you start the engine.)

I got into trouble with the 406 coupe while refuelling. After I'd paid the bill, the car wouldn't start. Suspecting the immobiliser, I discovered that the car would only start if I keyed in the correct code – even though, during my previous six days of motoring, I hadn't used the code at all. Trouble was, I didn't know the code. I guessed. It was wrong. I tried another code. Wrong. One more guess. Wrong. Then the car emitted a dull, persistent beep, as if to taunt my stupidity. (Three goes and you're out!)

A quick look at the handbook and I discovered that, after three incorrect code attempts, the car's engine automatically shuts down for 30 minutes. The Fina garage at Chiswick has few entertainments for those forced to spend half an hour there.

I have been wrongly immobilised by immobilisers, and the wretched alarms that often aid and abet them, before. I remember once being unable to get a £200,000-plus Bentley convertible going, after dutifully switching the engine off at a railway crossing. Other motorists, whose second-hand Fords and Vauxhalls seemed to be going just fine, thank you, were amused. I was not.

Another Bentley locked itself – keys inside – in a car wash. A £50,000 Jaguar XJR also decided to lock all its doors – but with engine running – when parked across my drive. Fortunately I had a spare set of keys and a spare plipper, otherwise – well, otherwise I don't know what I would have done. Once, in a Mercedes, with family and chattels on board on the way to a weekend break in Wales, the immobiliser just couldn't be persuaded to stop immobilising. It happened after refuelling. No matter how many times I pressed that damned plipper, and in what sequence, the engine wouldn't engage. Finally, inexplicably, it went, and we duly had our family weekend break in Wales rather than at Watford Gap services on the M1. I still don't know why it decided to go.

The other day, my wife was completely flummoxed by an unfamiliar Renault Megane Cabriolet's immobiliser in the car park of a sports club. Had it not been for a couple of big-hearted car-washing guys, who were more familiar with the vagaries of modern car gadgetry, she would probably still be there, plipping plippers, hoping to unlock the magical sequence that would ensure action.

A few car-makers do get it right. Among them is Ford, whose immobiliser is a simple device fitted into the key. If the right key is inserted into the ignition, the engine starts – just like it used to on old-fashioned Cortinas and Escorts. This prevents hot wiring. But it also prevents car park war-dances and stationary luxury cars on garage forecourts and level crossings.

It may not be quite as thief-proof as complicated plippers and whatnot, understood by only the most computer-literate of car owners. After all, any crook could take off in your Ford, if you leave the key in the ignition. With other systems, the thief would have to push buttons and make strange hand gesticulations before scarping.

Personally, I'll take the risk. Give me keys and locks any day. And cars that start when I want them to, not when some unfathomable computer programme says it's OK.



Gavin Green

Chamois vs Crewe's missile



Little and large: John Simister with the borrowed Silver Spur and his Singer Chamois

PHOTOGRAPH: TONY BUCKINGHAM/PICTURE COURTESY OF JACK BARCLAY, BARKLEY SQUARE

John Simister swaps his Imp-ish Singer for a 300-horsepower mobile mansion

Imagine. A weekend with a Rolls-Royce, and a brand-new one at that. A weekend in a Silver Spur, a car that costs almost exactly the same as our last house, which we sold two years ago for £139,942. A weekend of fantasy and social experimentation.

I drive many different cars in the course of writing road test reports, but I'm not blasé yet. However, I wouldn't really want to own a Silver Spur. A Ferrari 456GT is more my line, should the ownership opportunity arise. But I'm fairly confident it won't, so the only car that I own will remain my ancient but shiny Singer Chamois. But my Chamois, a sort of Hillman Imp Ghia, can still stand proud in the face of all this larger-than-life splendour, because it, too, has polished walnut veneer on its dashboard and doors, and lots of sparkly chrome bits. And it's just as perversely British, even if it is half the size and a third of the weight.

Besides, it's a chore inching the Rolls-Royce up my drive, which has high, stone-walled banks on either side, an awkward bend a third of the way up, and a tight turning area behind my back door. I've just brought the car back from Rolls-Royce's Crewe factory, where the latest changes to the range of hand-built motor cars – they're always "motor cars" at Crewe – have been detailed to me. In essence, the deal is body-colour bumpers, new interior colour schemes and a wider range of options. Radical updates are not Crewe's style; after all, the current Rolls-Royce shape has been around since 1981. (New models are on the way, though.)

Back at home, I'm soon caught up in a 17-point turn, so that when I next go out, I can go forwards. To go backwards would be to risk wearing away too many layers of that lustrous paintwork.

It's not so much the vastness that's the problem, more the squareness of the car. It gets in the way of the walls. Still, the air-conditioning keeps me cool. There's even some condensation forming on the giant chrome air vents, whose output is varied between Force One and Force 10 by pulling or pushing knobs like chrome organ stops.

Finally, it is parked. A Rolls-Royce, in my drive. Has my house just expanded? Is that a stone portico I see, and a ha-ha in the distance? No, but the Spur undoubtedly belongs. For a couple of days, at least.

That was Friday. Today is Saturday, and we're driving down, wife, daughter and I, to Brighton to see some friends who are staying at the Grand Hotel. In the boot is a picnic hamper or two, folding chairs and a table, but there's less space in there than you'd expect in a car so vast.

The vastness has a magnificent effect on the motorways, though. The Motor Car towers above every other, like a whale in a sea of plankton, and just the sight of that plated prow is enough to have the plebeians scut-

ling out of the way in due deference.

Nowhere to park on the Grand forecourt? Such a snag is of no importance to the Rolls-Royce owner-driver, or to a non-owner-driver like me. You simply stop, and smile at the doorman. He then engages you in polite conversation (the matter of the Rolls-Royce's retail price is, I'm sorry to say, broached early on) while showing pleasure at the beneficial effect the motor car is having on the hotel's ambience. It compensates for the scaffolding, which has not been showing the Grand in its grandest light.

Passengers installed in the leather chairs, with their toes buried in lambswool rugs, the Spur's "beverage holders" holding beverages, we wait off into the South Downs in search of a picnic venue. I don't do more than wait, because while the Silver Spur is unexpectedly fast (it has a gently turbocharged 6,750cc V8 engine with 300bhp and a pulling power approaching that of one of Eddie Stobart's finest), it does not like to be rushed if there's a corner involved. If I get too carried away, my charges heave around and the sense of occasion gives way to a sense of sickness. So it's a gentle drive to a country-park-type place, where we park among rusting Cavaliers and time-expired Sierras.

Do we feel just a tiny bit embarrassed? Yes,

but we have to brazen it out. After all, I can't go running to the owners of the other cars and say, "Yes, I know it's a bit extravagant, but actually it isn't mine. You see, I write about cars, and I've borrowed this one, and..."

Then a strange truth dawns. No one minds the Rolls-Royce. In fact, people like to see it, to admire it; there are no curled lips of envy, no mouthed obscenities. A Rolls-Royce is still seen by most folk as a beautiful and fine thing. To consider it naff is not a popular view outside the realms of champagne socialism.

I muse on this later, as I fill up the vast petrol tank and cause the cashier to telephone the credit card company because I've burst the card transaction limit. Is this a less jealous society than I thought? Or is it that I look so unlikely to be a Rolls-Royce owner that no one takes the idea seriously? A chap could get a severe crisis of confidence if he pursued this line of thought too vigorously.

Back to the Grand, goodbye to our friends, and another conversation and financial appraisal from the doorman. Then it's the motorway homewards, cocooned in cool opulence while ordinary folk swelter in the summer heat, and finally another 17-point turn to within inches of the rose bushes. Well, I've rather enjoyed the Rolls-Royce experience, and so has Mrs Simister. Miss Simister (aged 10), however, is a good deal more blasé than her father. "I was a bit disappointed with the Rolls-Royce," says she. "It hasn't got enough gadgets." It has, however, got more gadgets than a Singer Chamois.

Thunder from lightening



Vauxhall has announced details of its new Astra, before its unveiling at next month's Frankfurt Show. Longer, roomier, safer and more fuel-frugal than

the model it replaces, it will also be shown at the London Motor Show in October, before sales start next spring. The new hatchback, to be built in Britain, will boast the

best fuel figures in its class: Vauxhall claims up to 10 per cent better than the current model. There are six four-cylinder petrol engines in the range, and two turbodiesels.

A longer body gives more cabin space, but the use of more aluminium and magnesium alloy helps reduce the car's total mass, thereby improving fuel economy. The new model gets revised suspension, to try to give the car some bumpy-road poise.

Safety is also improved: the optional anti-lock brakes are more powerful, the air-bags are full size (rather than the less effective "Euro" bags) and there are three, three-point seatbelts in the rear. Vectra-like collapsible pedals – which cut down foot and leg injuries in accidents – and a totally zinc galvanised body are other Astra features.

Prices will be announced next spring. You can expect a modest rise on today's prices of just over £11,000.

Gavin Green

motoring

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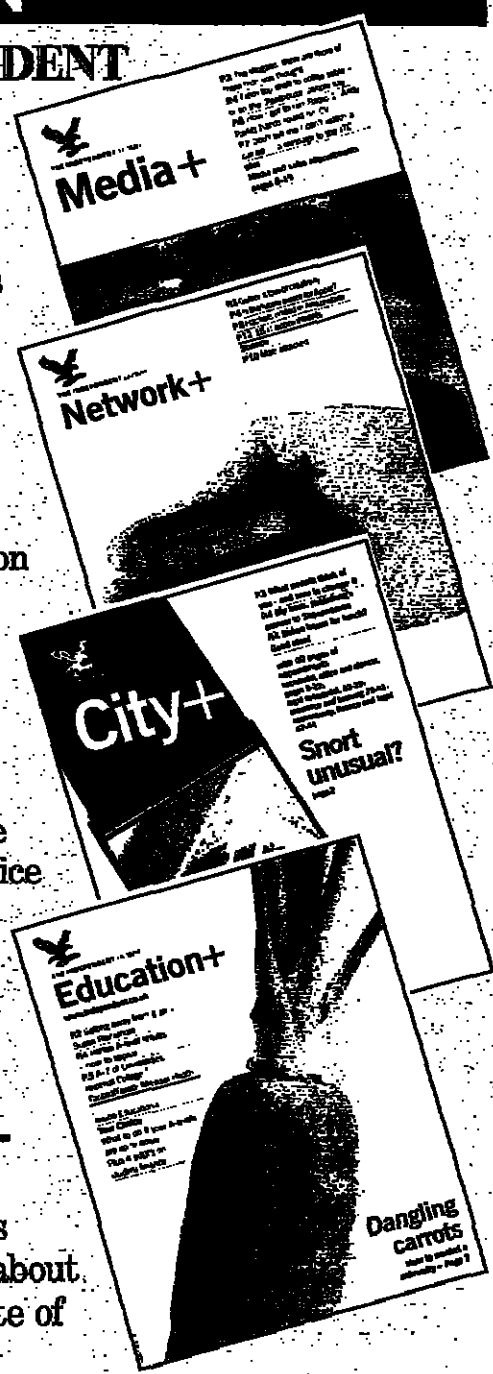
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Private investors stay at home

London may be the world's "It" City once again, but it is not a pleasant place to be just now. Uncharacteristically high humidity, coupled with soaring temperatures, has meant that traders from Hong Kong and New York should feel quite at home walking the streets of EC3. Jeans and shirtsleeves feel more appropriate than bowler hats and rolled umbrellas.

The stock market has a heavy summer feel about it too. The love affair with 5,000 continues and even gyrations on Wall Street have failed to upset the enthusiasm of investors in the Square Mile. Perhaps traders find their air-conditioned offices more comfortable than home.

By and large the interim results season has done the market no harm.

If not a universally rosy picture, UK Plc has really not been doing too badly.

The ravages of high sterling have not impacted quite as much as many feared, while the financial sector has gone a long way to justifying the considerable outperformance delivered so far this year.

Still, I am glad not to have BICC in my portfolios.

It is well to remember the old adage that the stock market is a market of stocks. The index is an average and there is no guarantee



Brian Tora

The UK stock market is No 3 in the world, punching way above its weight if you look at the size of the economy

method of picking the top performers.

The hot weather and the holiday season provide a good opportunity to reflect upon the overseas content of portfolios.

Holidaymakers in Thailand are enjoying excellent value in terms of what their money will buy while investors in this golden kingdom are having a torrid time.

But do Mr & Mrs Average Investor actually put money in Thailand? Or anywhere else overseas for that matter?

If the APCIMS (Association of Private Client Investment Managers and Stockbrokers) benchmarks are to be believed, they do.

These benchmarks were launched earlier this year accompanied by, if not a fanfare, certainly a loud blast on a horn.

The aim was to provide a form of measurement that would allow private client

stockbrokers to demonstrate whether or not they were delivering performance that was comparable to their peers.

Very laudable, but not everyone agrees with the methodology.

The problem is that there is no such thing as an average client. Indeed, the whole point about private client investment management should be that you deliver an individual solution to meet an individual's circumstances.

Still, with performance becoming more of an issue with investors, it is becoming increasingly important for those who are seeking to manage money on an active basis to be able to demonstrate that they add value.

The benchmarks themselves were compiled after consulting with APCIMS members who manage many billions of pounds of private investors' money.

According to them, 30 per cent

of a portfolio invested for growth on behalf of a private investor is likely to be committed to overseas markets.

This is a lot. Rather more than our pension fund managers believe appropriate, for example. For them just 15 per cent will be invested overseas, although there are the constraints that actuaries delight in applying.

Asset/liability mismatching can be costly - as banks have found out to their cost in the past. So investing in sterling securities for UK pensioners makes sense.

The benchmarks do not go as far as breaking down this 30 per cent into geographic areas, but if you treat the various markets in terms of size, you arrive at a potential asset allocation which I suspect few private investors achieve.

The Morgan Stanley Capital International Index, still the standard benchmark for measuring equity market performance, shows that, excluding the UK, around 50 per cent of world markets by value are represented by the North American stock markets.

Japan now accounts for just 16 per cent. It is sobering to remember that not so very many years ago Japan was vying with the US as the largest stock market in the world.

Europe, ex the UK, would account for 20 per cent of this

universe. Add the UK to that and you are approaching 30 per cent of the whole, so you can see what an important stock market the UK is - number three in the world, punching way above its weight if you look at the size of our economy.

Of the racier markets, the Pacific Rim accounts for around 8 per cent and Emerging Markets some 5.5 per cent.

Translate that into how you might invest a private client portfolio and you would probably have just 1.5 per cent in emerging markets, around one tenth of that allocated to the US.

Looking at our own clients suggests that the average private investor (whoever he or she may be) does not invest this way at all. First of all, nothing like 30 per cent of portfolios appear to be invested abroad on average.

Then, when you look at where the money directed to foreign parts travels, the US does not seem anything like as popular as its size would suggest.

The Far East, on the other hand, has always received a great deal of attention from British investors.

It seems the public are quite as capable of making wrong decisions as the professionals.

Perhaps we might look at the best choices for investing overseas. But that can wait until the weather is cooler.



loose change

Citibank is increasing the rates paid on its sterling current accounts and high-interest savings accounts. On savings between £2,000 and £9,999, the rate paid is 4.75 per cent, rising to 6 per cent gross on deposits above £50,000. Call 0800 006800.

Alliance & Leicester is offering customers who open a new current account with the former building society a £30 credit. To qualify, customers must open the account before 31 October and deposit at least £300. Students must pay in a grant cheque. Call 0500 959595.

Cheltenham & Gloucester is increasing the cost of its fixed-rate mortgages. Two-year fixed rates rise to 7.19 per cent, while four-year fixed rates will increase to 7.49 per cent.

Abbey Life is launching a five-year Guaranteed Capital Growth Bond, which guarantees a 20 per cent return on the investment, or the chance to gain up to 70 per cent growth in the FTSE 100 share index. Minimum investment level is £5,000. Call 0800 202040.

Save & Prosper is to launch an open-ended investment

company, a new type of fund available in the UK. The fund will specialise in Eastern European investments and will be managed by Fleming, S&P's parent company. Call 0800 829200.

Portman Channel Islands, the building society's offshore arm, is launching a one-year fixed-interest bond paying 7.25 per cent gross on deposits of as little as £500. Call 01481 822747 or access the society through its Internet site on <http://www.portmanci.com>

Fidelity will keep its Tonbridge office open until midnight on Sunday 17 August to accept holders of Woolwich shares who want to PEP their holdings for free. The company will accept shares from people who have yet to receive certificates from Woolwich, as long as they are certified as Oakhill House, 130 Tonbridge Road, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9DZ. Call 01732 777261.

Bank of Scotland's direct banking arm is linking a chequebook to its highest-rate deposit account. Customers will receive 24-hour banking and immediate access to their funds. Interest paid is 5 per cent gross on deposits up to £4,999 and 6.5 per cent gross thereafter.



Basic ways to ban the bomb

Rachel Fixsen on where ethical investors can put their money

If you don't like bombs, chances are you don't particularly want to help anyone buy the materials to make one. But you could end up doing the same thing indirectly if you keep your money with a bank which lends money to arms manufacturers. Applying your personal moral code to your day-to-day banking and savings is no simple matter. It is straightforward enough to put long-term savings into an ethical or green investment fund, as there are various funds on offer which are run along these lines. These funds have their own set ethical or environmental criteria, and any shares they hold must meet these guidelines.

But moral judgements are hard to make when it comes to banks which, by their nature as lenders, have their fingers in many pies. Managers of ethical funds often avoid the financial sector because corporate lending is largely undisclosed and therefore a murky area.

Michael New, senior consultant at independent financial advisers Barchester Green, which specialises in green/ethical investments, says the opportunities are limited for clients who ask where they can save their money ethically. "It is a problem. Almost always the answer is you can't," he says.

"There is a great need for an ethical building society on the high street," he says. But there's little chance of one springing up any time soon.

The Co-op Bank provides a range of banking services and adheres to a strict ethical policy. Among other things, it pledges not to invest in or supply financial services to any oppressive regime and says it will not lend to tobacco product manufacturers.

Its rates of interest are comparatively good. Co-op's Save Direct instant savings account pays 5 per cent a year on a balance of £1,000, with higher rates tiered from £5,000, according to financial data provider Moneyfacts.

Triodos Bank, which used to be called Mercury Provident before it was taken over by a Dutch bank, offers various savings accounts. It says all loans it makes with savers' money go to projects which benefit the community and environment. One of its partner organisations in South Africa lent money to help a Soweto pre-school buy land and build classrooms. Affordable pre-schools increase family income by letting mothers work, Triodos says.

Triodos' Social Investor account pays 3.25 per cent annual interest with a minimum balance of £500 and you have to give 33 days' notice to withdraw your money. The bank offers two Tassas. Its Top Tessa pays 7 per cent interest, whereas the Target Tessa pays only 3.5 per cent, but lets you choose which projects or sectors your money will be lent to.

Another option is West Yorkshire-based Ecology Building Society. It will only lend to people buying properties which have an ecological payback - for example organic smallholdings or the renovation of derelict houses which would otherwise be abandoned.

You have to be a member of a green organisation such as Greenpeace before you can open one of its savings accounts. All accounts are postal accounts, and you can choose from the Eco-Instant account, which pays 3.5 per cent gross, and a Tessa, which pays 6 per cent and stipulates a £100 minimum balance.

For philanthropic savers willing to accept a rate of interest even lower than inflation, there is Newcastle-based Shared Interest, which supports the fair trade market. It lends money to help Third World producers with their costs until enough consumer sales come in. "We have some clients who put £1,000 into this, but this is money they really are making as a charitable donation," says Philip Chapman, partner at IFA firm Holden Meehan, which specialises in ethical and green investment.

If you are looking for a mainstream institution, from an ethical and green point of view, building societies are better than banks. Mr Chapman says he might recommend Bradford & Bingley to a client with ethical concerns looking for a building society. The law states that the vast majority of building society lending has to be housing-related, and the rest has to have the backing of members. However, the wave of societies converting to banks has complicated the picture.

Karen Eldridge of the Ethical Investment Research Service (EIRS) says those building societies which have only recently converted to banks are acceptable for savers not opposed to conversion, as they are still predominantly involved in housing. But keep your eyes open for any changes. "Of the big four banks, it's generally accepted among ethical funds that NatWest is better," she says.

According to a report last year in specialist publication *Ethical Consumer*, NatWest scored as highly as the Co-op Bank when judged on environmental criteria.

Co-operative Bank, 0345 252000; Ecology Building Society, 0345 697753; Triodos Bank, 0500 008720; Shared Interest, 0345 023008; Barchester Green Investment, 01722 331241. Holden Meehan, 0117 9252874, publishes a free independent guide to ethical and green investment funds.

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Another option for carpetbaggers

The summer has brought plenty of rain and even more carpetbagging fever. This is a condition brought on by exposure to the magic words "demutualisation" and "windfall cash or shares".

Symptoms are recognisable as an urge to become a member of a building society before it converts to a bank. This week Birmingham Midshires members heard their society was to be taken over by Royal Bank of Scotland. The £600m-plus price tag equals about £600 for each of Midshires' 1.1 million policyholders, including about 300,000 speculators who joined the society in recent months for just this reason.

Many building societies hoping to keep out carpetbaggers have either pulled down the shutters or set high cash minimums of £2,500 or more to open an account that confers membership rights.

One way to ensure a share in any payout, while earning a decent return on your investment, is to buy Permanent Interest Bearing Shares (Pibs) issued by many building societies as a means of raising money. Ownership of Pibs confers member status. Pibs pay a fixed income and their prices have been going up. In part, this has been a response to the potential for free shares from future demutualisations. So how do they work, and are they a surefire route to windfall gains?

Building societies are prevented by law from borrowing in the way that banks can – from other banks.

This is because mutual status limits the liabilities that a society can enter into when borrowing and obliges it to protect members who have deposit accounts or mortgage loans. Pibs offer a convenient way for societies to get round the problem.

For example, Bradford & Bingley made one issue to raise £60m, with a "coupon rate" of 13 per cent. This means that the society raised £60m by offering to pay a yield of 13 per cent gross, split between two annual payments.

With basic-rate tax deducted at source, the yield was cut to 9.75 per cent. Once issued, Pibs can be bought

You don't have to sacrifice good returns for a chance of free shares, writes Iain Morse

and sold like any other share. The price of Bradford & Bingley Pibs has gone up, reducing the current gross yield to around 7.99 per cent, which comes down to 6.07 per cent net for a basic-rate taxpayer.

The price of Pibs has generally tended to rise, reflecting the relatively high interest rates prevailing when most of them were issued five to six years ago.

As our table shows, gross returns are now between 7.6 and 7.99 per cent for all issues. Are they a good bargain?

Justin Urquhart-Stewart, a director at Barclays Stockbrokers, warns: "The market for Pibs is linked to interest rates. Speculation [over conversion to bank status] may be driving their prices up, but if the wave of demutualisation slows down and interest rates rise, prices could suffer."

"Remember, when you buy Pibs you are really buying a stream of future income. If the price of Pibs falls, you may not get back the purchase price."

Of course, the price of Pibs to fall, the income receivable from the shares would go up correspondingly.

Pibs are not subject to capital gains tax, but neither can they be placed in a PEP, the wrapper used to protect many investments from tax.

Income is not guaranteed, while payments can be suspended if the society decides that making them puts its solvency at risk. If the society is wound up then owners of Pibs come last on the list to be repaid, after depositors and other creditors.

Mr Urquhart-Stewart concedes: "This is unlikely. The investment is low risk." He adds, however: "These are a dying breed of investment, never much traded, or very popular, and rather left out in the cold by corporate bond

PEPs. They represent another way into windfalls, but a lot depends on the pace of future demutualisation."

Not everyone agrees with this assessment. Last year JP Cairngorm Asset Management, a small Scottish fund management company, launched a Building Society Investment Trust to buy into Pibs and related bank bonds.

Chairman Ken Murray points out: "It's a matter of when you buy and how you do it. The trust has holdings in all society Pibs. We therefore manage a portfolio. This should reduce risk for the investor."

The Cairngorm trust is split into 10 subsidiary trusts, a structure designed to maximise the return from windfalls. Shares are currently trading at around £9.40 for 10, with an estimated net asset value of between 113 and 115 pence per share, based on the current market for all stocks held, with a net yield of 4 per cent. Mr Murray's strategic view is clear: "We expect demutualisation to continue as a trend."

Of course, predicting when a particular conversion will take place is impossible and societies are keen to dispel speculation. Buying Pibs makes the purchaser a member of the society just like an account holder or borrower. This means that if the society demutualises, converting to bank status, all members may be due to participate in any windfall of shares or cash.

Most societies issuing Pibs give immediate membership to Pib owners. Some may impose a minimum period on ownership as they do with account holders. JP Cairngorm's trust hopes to benefit from this but Mr Murray accepts that windfalls are not guaranteed. The Building Society Act only makes provision for part of the society's funds or equivalent shares to be distributed among members, subject to rules of eligibility.

When demutualising, societies can therefore choose to distribute cash or shares. The law prevents cash windfalls to members of less than two years.

Neither are there any statutory rules on the qualifying period of membership for share windfalls. Although not likely, a society could backdate this to the date of first press speculation on demutualisation. Moreover, the price of investing in Pibs can be at least as high as simply opening a speculators' account with a society.

In the case of Bradford & Bingley, minimum subscription is £10,000, although for Britannia, Coventry and Skipton – all societies in the frame over possible conversion – minimum levels start at £1,000.

The only certainty of investing in Pibs is the future income they will pay. Those suffering windfall fever should take an aspirin and find advice from a stockbroker.

Barclays Stockbrokers, which specialises in Pibs, can be contacted on 0345 777 4000.

Building society permanent interest bearing shares

ISSUE SIZE (£m)	SOCIETY	COUPON RATE	OFFER PRICE	OFFER YIELD (Gross)
50	Bradford & Bingley	11.5/8%	146 1/4	7.95%
110	Britannia	13.00%	163 3/8	7.96%
20	First National	11 3/4%	148 3/4	7.90%
10	Manchester	10 3/4%	139 3/8	7.71%
		12.50%	158 3/4	7.95%

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First National	10.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	10.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
VARIABLE RATES				
Barclays Bank	4.50 for 2 years	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	5.00 for 2 years	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	5.00 for 2 years	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	5.00 for 2 years	£50,000	£50	£2,000
FIRST TIME BUYERS FIXED RATES				
Barclays Bank	5.50 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	6.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	6.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	6.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
FIRST TIME BUYERS VARIABLE RATES				
Barclays Bank	2.50 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	3.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	3.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000
First National	3.00 for 1 year	£50,000	£50	£2,000

Telephone	APR %	Max LTV	Fixed monthly payments (£2,000 over 3 yrs)
OVERSEAS			
Barclays Bank	12.00	100%	£167.50
First National	12.00	100%	£167.50
First National	12.00	100%	£167.50
First National	12.00	100%	£167.50
DOMESTIC			
Barclays Bank	12.00	100%	£167.50
First National	12.00	100%	£167.50
First National	12.00	100%	£167.50
First National	12.00	100%	£167.50

Telephone	Card Type	Rate	APR	Annual fee	Int. free
STANDARD					
Barclays Bank	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days
First National	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days
First National	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days
First National	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days
GOLD CARDS					
Barclays Bank	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days
First National	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days
First National	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days
First National	Visa	1.50	12.00	£4	54 days

Telephone	Payment by direct debit	Payment by other methods
Barclays Bank		
Visa	1.50	1.50
MasterCard	1.50	1.50
Visa	1.50	1.50
MasterCard	1.50	1.50
First National		
Visa	1.50	1.50
MasterCard	1.50	1.50
Visa	1.50	1.50
MasterCard	1.50	1.50

A - Minimum age 22 yrs. Holders of comprehensive motor insurance policy or lender's existing customers.
APR - Annual percentage rate.
ASU - Accident, sickness and unemployment insurance.
B+C - Buildings and contents insurance.
D - Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged.
E - Loan to value.
MFP - Mortgage indemnity premium.
N - Introductory rate for a limited period.
U - Unemployment insurance.
All rates subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01822 500677 14 August 1997

Best savings rates

Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate	Interest
Instant Access					
Barclays Bank	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.50%	£2,000
First National	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.50%	£2,000
First National	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.50%	£2,000
First National	Instant Access	Instant	£1,000	5.50%	£2,000
Fixed Rate					
Barclays Bank	Fixed Rate	1 year	£1,000	6.00%	£2,000
First National	Fixed Rate	1 year	£1,000	6.00%	£2,000
First National	Fixed Rate	1 year	£1,000	6.00%	£2,000
First National	Fixed Rate	1 year	£1,000	6.00%	£2,000

Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate	Interest
Overseas					
Barclays Bank	Overseas	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Overseas	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Overseas	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Overseas	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000

Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate	Interest
Domestic					
Barclays Bank	Domestic	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Domestic	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Domestic	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Domestic	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000

Telephone	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate	Interest
Specialist					
Barclays Bank	Specialist	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Specialist	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Specialist	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000
First National	Specialist	1 year	£1,000	12.00%	£2,000

All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01822 500677 14 August 1997

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"I have just received a tax rebate of £634.20... Keep up the good work." MJ, Worcestershire

This year sees the most radical change in our tax system for many years – the introduction of self-assessment tax returns. This new system puts the onus on you – the taxpayer – to give the Inland Revenue accurate information. If you don't, or if you're late with your Return, you may face penalties of up to £100.

TaxCalc can save you time and money

But don't panic, help is now at hand. Now in its 15th year, TaxCalc 1996-97 is the UK's leading software package (including both CD-ROM and disk versions) which will complete the new self-assessment tax return for you, helping you to avoid expensive mistakes and calculate exactly how much tax you should be paying. Simply enter your personal details on-screen and TaxCalc does the rest!

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POSTAGE AND PACKING FREE!

Go mad and live a little

Nic Cicutti discusses the pains and pleasures of taking risks

Risk. This is a word which appears again and again in all discussions about investment, a word which encapsulates the very essence of any fund management strategy or financial product design.

Generally, the degree of risk you are prepared to accept for your money will determine the return you receive from it. But here is a conundrum: who defines what is risky and what is not? Clearly, what you or I accept is a hazardous – even foolhardy – financial strategy will be seen by another person as the quintessence of safe-as-hands money management.

It is virtually impossible to determine for everyone and everywhere what is or is not an acceptable level of risk. But we can begin to discuss a few of the principles that should govern our attitude to this subject. Thereafter, we can examine some of the most common products and place them in some kind of order according to the risk they subject to cash placed with them.

The first point to understand is that theoretically, there is no investment which is 100 per cent free of risk. Moreover, the word itself is elastic and can have different meanings.

For example, one understanding of risk is where even a nice, seemingly safe building society could go belly-up, leaving you to claim compensation worth just 90 per cent of your deposit, up to a £20,000 maximum. Another understanding of risk is that the interest paid on your deposit is less than inflation at that point in time.

The second point is that our willingness to accept financial risk can change according to many circumstances, including age, for instance. Younger investors can afford to take a more long-term view if equity prices fall. Older investors, particularly those close to retirement, need to protect their capital.

Third, although the safest form of investment may still be that mythical building society account, better performance has tended to come from equities.

That is not to say that share prices move up in an uninterrupted curve. Volatility, as seen by yesterday's fall in the FTSE 100 share index, will always remain with us. The key then is how to average out the cost of investing.

Take a fund in which you invest £1,000 every year for 10 years. If the value of the fund increases by a set amount every year, you will show a certain return. By comparison, if you invested in a far more volatile fund, which experiences a range of ups and downs, you might feel you were likely to be investing in a loser.

Actually, that is not necessarily certain. The £1,000 you invest in "bad"

years will buy you more shares, units or whatever the measure of investment is. In an upturn, those "cheap" units will grow faster in relative terms and, because you have more of them, your gains will be greater.

A fourth point to consider is the effect that interest rate movements can have on the value of your capital.

Say you buy a fixed-interest security, such as a corporate bond. The bond cost £100 and has an income of £10, or 10 per cent of the sum invested. If interest rates were to fall to 8 per cent, the value of the investment grows. This is because the corporate bond's income, which may previously have been unexceptional, suddenly becomes more attractive. More people will want to buy it, pushing prices up.

If the income of £10 is deemed to be equal to the new interest rate of 8 per cent, the bond's price may have to rise to £125. This seesaw also implies risk in the market. If you invest at the wrong time, a rise in interest rates can have the opposite effect on the value of your corporate bond.

Either way, what also becomes clear is that, unless interest rate movements begin to grate madly, the level of risk is smaller with fixed-interest securities than with straightforward equity investments.

Which takes us to the next point about understanding risk. As our illustration at the bottom of this story shows, there are different levels of risk depending on the type of financial product one is considering.

This table is useful if you speak to an independent financial adviser who will want to recommend a product to you. But the important point to remember is that risk is not the only basis for investing. The suitability of a product is as important as the issue of whether capital erosion may take place.

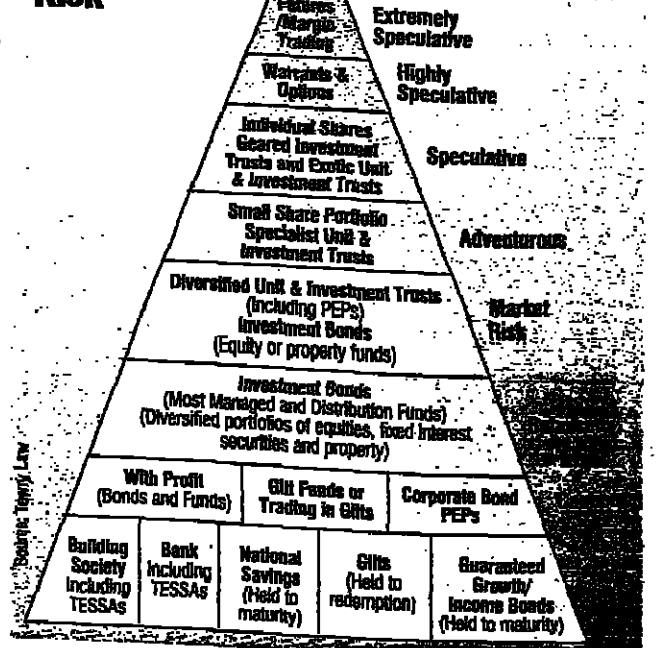
One key aspect of any understanding of risk is that investments do not all present the same risks at the same time. While UK share prices have rocketed ahead in the past 18 months, Japanese equities have languished.

Investing in just one stock market might involve greater risks than necessary for little reward.

The final part of understanding risk is that it is something to savour and even enjoy in moderation. If you can afford it, take risks with some of your money, as long as you are prepared to lose the lot.

Towry Law, a firm of independent financial advisers, is offering copies of its "Principles of Investing" to readers of *The Independent*. Write to Towry Law, Baylis House, Stoke Poges Lane, Slough, Berks, SL1 3PB or call 0345 889933.

The Pyramid of rising Risk



UK GROWTH & INCOME		UK EQUITY & BOND		UK EQUITY & BOND INCOME		UK FIXED INTEREST		UK GILTS		INTERNATIONAL FIXED INTEREST		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING JAPAN)		INTERNATIONAL EQUITY INCOME		FUND OF FUNDS		EUROPE		UK SMALLER COMPANIES		FAIR EAST (EXCLUDING 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150 من الامل

TO FIND OUT WHAT'S ON TV, WHERE TO GO AND WHEN, READ THE EYE TODAY

Go mad and live a little



Serena Mackesy
In my week

It's not easy, you know, being a techno-queen in a family who practically cross themselves at the sight of a computer

The rhododendrons drip in that familiar way that will be always associated in my mind with childhood holidays. Scots, on the whole, go on holiday in Scotland, and exiled Scots go on holiday in Scotland, too. While the rest of Britain whines about the heat, the north east of Scotland is cloaked in a haat, and conversation revolves around whether a wind will come and blow it away. This is of particular interest at the moment because the grouse season started on Tuesday and German businessmen don't like it when nature conspires to blur their sights.

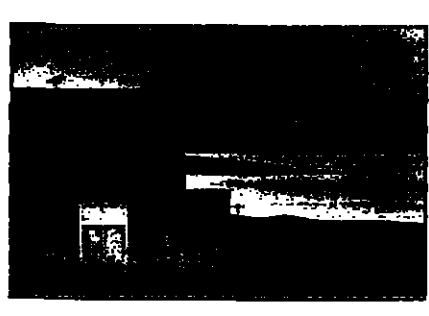
The cat hasn't left his chair in days. He occasionally moves in it, to avoid bedsores, but otherwise all is still. The dog occupies the other kitchen armchair, casting looks of pure tragedy at anyone foolish enough to pay heed. I spend my time wading through the grass under the beeches in search of chanterelles, reading about 1930s dope fiends, and sorting out the Luddism of my kin.

It's not easy, you know, being a techno-queen in a family who practically cross themselves at the sight of a computer. Living in rural Aberdeenshire doesn't help: everyone around here seems to take pride in not understanding things electronic. I think there's an element of the class thing involved, a belief that microwaves and videos are the province of wideboys, like barbecues, swimming pools and fish-knives. But then, my folks have always been a bit slow on the uptake, prone to reading the instruction booklets on radios.

Ten years ago, they won a colour television in a raffle. Nine years ago, I came across it, still in its box, lurking in an out-house, while the ancient black-and-white juddered along, turning *Panorama* into myopia. I trotted indoors. "Why," I enquired, "aren't you using the colour telly?" "Oh, well, we can't use it. We've only got a black-and-white aerial." A year later, I was telling this story to another family member who,

instead of finding it hilarious, got very indignant. "Well," she said, "that shows how much you know. We spent £179 having our colour aerial installed." I don't identify her to protect her from a queue of people trying to sell her 'Tower Bridge' or something.

On my first night home this visit, I remembered, at the last minute, that there was a film I wanted to tape. No luck. All channels presented nothing but snow: the video was no longer picking up a signal. "Oh, it's been like that for months," they said. "It just suddenly went like that." On asking a couple of questions, I found that the strange phenomenon had coincided with the launch of Channel 5. "Didn't the returners come?" Father frowned. "Returners?" I explained the term. Eyebrows were raised. "Really? No one told us." "Didn't you see the ads?" "Ads?" "Yes. In the papers.



On the billboards. On the telly?" There was some thought, then the answer came. "Oh, well, we saw those, but we didn't want Channel 5, so we didn't pay any attention to them."

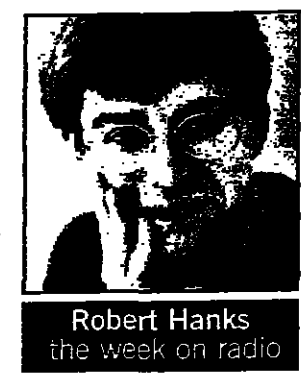
I heard one of those little strangled "sargh" noises issue from the back of my throat, sat down with the manual and returned the vid, discovered that the telly was knackered anyway, sorted that out as well. The previous generation gathered round, cooing with amazement. "It's been the talk of all the dinner parties," said Patricia, "the fact that all our videos broke down at the same time." Seems that the entire county has been convinced that they have been subject to some weird *X-Files* phenomenon, caused either by UFOs or the

English. Of course, to some extent the latter could be said to be true.

Meanwhile, the great saga of the telephone continues. Christmas brought a free trial of Call Minder, which caused kerfuffle because the letter telling them about it had been dumped as junk mail and a month's messages had piled up before they were discovered. This part of the BT sales drive, thankfully, is now over, but the caraged calls go on. "People keep ringing up and asking if I got their message," says Patricia, who in point of fact is a great communicator. She's obsessed with the 1471 function now she's got her head round it, and should be a prime customer for these gadgets. "They get a woman's voice saying 'I know they're calling, but I've never had any of their messages. And another thing,' she continues indignantly, "I keep getting this annoying beeping noise when I'm talking."

They have been given a trial of Call Waiting. And their friends, bless 'em, have been bubbling over the top of it and assuming they're being recorded. Maybe that's the function of technology, though: to give each generation a sense of superiority over their forebears. And my dad may have required instructions to work a cash-point, but at least he can post a letter without damaging himself in some way. Ducking under the dripping branches of a pine wood yesterday, I let out a fine Highland whoop, executed a somersault more perfect than anything I ever attained in gym class, and exploded my left ankle for the third time since December. The dog was delighted. The old man, who has, touch wood, passed the threescore and ten without so much as chipping a bone, lent me his walking stick to hop home, and now I'm sitting in front of a fire, full of Ibuprofen and whisky, and wondering which is better: knowing how to work an invalid carriage or simply never having need of one in the first place.

The world's favourite language



Robert Hanks
the week on radio

At some point, presumably, we'll be able to stop feeling guilty about the British empire. After all, nobody gets especially hot up about the Romans these days, and they actually went around crucifying people. But while our imperial past still needs justification – or mitigation, at any rate; justification probably isn't on the cards – a strong point in its favour is the vast body of literature in English that it produced.

No doubt some writers and readers in some parts of what was the empire feel, like R S Thomas, anglophone Welsh poet, that they have been robbed of their own language and culture: English burns the tongue, but it is the only language they know. But the hegemony of English has several virtues. For one thing, it is a useful and ornamental language in its own right – the only one capable of sustaining an art-form as rigorously self-contained as the cryptic crossword. For another, its status as *lingua franca* of the largest empire the world has yet known means that writers and readers from opposite ends of the earth can

be introduced to one another without worrying about what's getting lost in the translation – Flann O'Brien and Salman Rushdie can have a common audience. And these writers have the advantage, as it seems to be, of writing in a language that is both their own and not their own: they are native speakers, but they have, perhaps, an awareness of the language's individual quirks and an ability to work against the grain that come harder to writers who are simply English.

For confirmation of that last point, you can turn to the current Book at Bedtime (Radio 4,

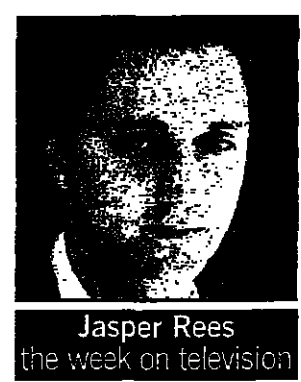
Monday-Friday). Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, read by Roshan Seth: it's gripping, not so much because of the plot's twists and elaborately achieved moments of irony and significance, but because it never slips into well-worn grooves of speech, never falls for the idle cliché, but is constantly striving for precision. I'm not so sure you should turn to the *Cruiskeen Lawn* (Radio 4, Wednesday), which is based on a long-running humorous newspaper column by Flann O'Brien (real name Brian O'Nolan and most of the stuff here was written under the pen-name Myles na Gopaleen, but you know who we're talking about).

There were some enjoyable moments in here – a pleasingly extravagant description of the author's personal beauty, taken one sublime feature at a time – but much of it sounded weak or derivative. The only really exciting parts were extracts from O'Brien's novel *At Swim-Two-Birds*, which gave some idea of the baroque flights of which he was capable. Possibly the newspaper bits read better than they sound in David Batchelor's annoyingly

mannered production.

O'Brien was far better served by Fi Sci (Radio 4, Tuesday) – or, to give it its full title, *Fi Sci – Fiction Science not Science Fiction*, a choice that reflects badly on all parties concerned. The idea is that Steve Jones, the amazing performing geneticist, analyses the scientific content of famous novels. This week, he examined Mark Twain's views on heredity, as represented by Pudd'nhead Wilson. Since the book was clearly designed largely as a contribution to the debate, this was no more than moderately interesting. But last week's, on O'Brien's *The Third Policeman*, was excellent, with Jones and several co-operative cosmologists and particle physicists contriving to find support in modern science for some of O'Brien's surreal inventions – light stretched into sound, men exchanging particles with their bicycles, a sausage-shaped world in which multi-directional travel is merely an illusion. This was a fitting tribute to a strange and brilliant mind, and a reminder that the only empire nobody need ever apologise for is the empire of the imagination.

Say it with 'quotation' marks



Jasper Rees
the week on television

Post-modernism's latest grand project is the rehabilitation of Terry Wogan, who made his first tentative steps up the ladder of ironic self-reinvention by agreeing to share his pet hates on this week's *Room 101* (BBC 2, Fri). Most of the things he claimed to fear and loathe were home bankers – *EastEnders*, *Cantona* – but *Have I Got News For You* was a more astutely media-literate bit of devil's advocacy. Being a BBC 2 stablemate of *Room 101*, its nomination looked to anyone not versed in the rules of irony to be a straight case of fratricide. Not a bit of it: this is precisely the kind of reflexivity, of allusive trickery, that makes people high up in BBC 2 do cartwheels in celebration of their own cultural slipperiness.

It wouldn't have needed explaining to Wogan that *Have I Got News For You* is best mates with *Room 101* presenter Nick Hancock, nor that when Wogan was on *Room 101* he said he hated Radio 2, on which Wogan is himself a star presenter. (Wogan also nominated the clever-clever BBC 2 logo, but then no one on broadcasting works harder at his irony.) It gets worse. To illustrate *Have I Got News For You*, Hancock chose clips not only from the two occasions when he hap-

pened to be a guest on the programme but also when he told exactly the same joke. Ever get the feeling BBC 2 has gone potholing up its own grotto? If so, blame Michael Jackson, who is now at Channel 4 after a spell pretending to be a populist at BBC 1. The channel that looks most like his baby is still BBC2, with its single eyebrow permanently raised in the wry fashion of the person who knows that someone else in the room has farted but he's not going to make a big stink about it. There surely won't be long to wait before someone goes on *Room 101* and tells Hancock that the thing they hate most in the world is *Room 101*. In an ironic world of perfect circularity the guest who does so would be Jackson himself. But ironically, unlike his namesake, he isn't famous enough.

Jackson's influence hasn't really been felt yet in his new job, but *A Date With...* (C4, Sun) feels like the kind of thing he might have commissioned. It uses the grammar of the game show to deliver a homily about the ways in which disabled people fail to get a fair deal. There were three contestants, neatly fanned out across the various disabilities – one blind, one lame, and one with a stammer. They had plainly been selected because of looks and confidence and the likelihood that they would embody an affirmative message. The irony of the show, presumably unintentional – although you can never tell these days – is that the programme's chief handicapper came in the form of its able-bodied presenter Tony Slattery. Slattery has been in professional freefall for a couple of years now, and the only job he's fit for is sending himself up. Here his brief was to pretend to be offensive, to illustrate what the disabled contestants have to put up with when they're not on television. It was all just a thin line away from his more usual speciality, which is to do away with the pretence.

One of the few irony-free zones on BBC 2 is *Newsnight* (BBC2, weekdays). On Monday there was an item on the doctoring of the Di 'n

Dodi pics. It's interesting to note that the Princess of Wales is now unblinkingly referred to as "Di" on a programme that is thought to be a last bastion of seriousness. Piers Morgan, the editor of *The Mirror* who published the doctored photographs, was sufficiently persuaded of the programme's po-faced to pull out of the interview two hours before transmission. It can only be a matter of time before, just as *Have I Got News For You* put a tub of lard in the place where the serial withdrawal Roy Hattersley should have been sitting, *Newsnight* uses similar tactics to announce the chickening out of its guests. In Morgan's case, a white feather in a cup of slime would have done the trick.

Edinburgh Nights (BBC 2, Mon) has also succumbed to the ironic minesweepers defusing the pockets of seriousness dotted around the channel's schedule. Hitherto a capable arts programme, it now has the ubiquitous Mark Lamarr presenting what looks like late-night competition for *Not The Jack Docherty Show* (C5, weekdays). After a bonzo band had done their worst, Lamarr assured us that "it's much better when the audience clap in time". Apparently said without irony.

DAMIEN HURTS....and his painfully creative struggle

ANYTHING NEW FOR MY COLLECTION, DAMIEN?

I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A CROSSOVER OF TWO ART FORMS.

I'VE BEEN PRODUCING ICE SCULPTURES, AND COMBINING THEM WITH MY CUBISM PERIOD.

I CALL IT 'ICE CUBE'.

GOSH!! WOULD TWENTY GRAND BUY IT?

Neil Kerber

Whatever happened to... Perms

Curly Whirly
Fashion victims first threw away their rags for the new chemical curls in August 1909, but perms took off in the Twenties and Thirties when the Clara Bow and Gene Harlow look was emulated. Then it was a lengthy process involving cardboard tubes, peroxide and having your head attached to a mini nuclear power station.

Kinky Gerlinky
But perms really came into their own

in the late Seventies when Farrah Fawcett flick-ups gave way to tightly curled disco chic. Every professional footballer seemed to sport curls as a right of passage to Tramps nightclub.

Meltdown
Perms have also been the cause of some of the worst hairdressing disasters. If not used properly, the effect is rather like putting your barret in a chip fryer, resulting in a melted candy floss look, a burnt

scalp and, occasionally, permanent baldness.

Curl up and Dye
In the Eighties, perms were the most popular hairstyle a girl could have: you could have anything from a demi-wave to a spiral or root lift. But perms had a tendency for the person's hair to look like straw or to be drowning under a weight of hair gel. The trend also signalled a revolution in the amount of hair care and styling

products available, promising to make hair feel natural when in truth it had been stripped bare and bent into an unnatural state. Reaching a non-poodle look meant hours upside down under the diffuser with an afro comb and lashings of hair spray. There was no such thing as wash and go and God help you if it rained.

Straight Talking
Since the Nineties, straight hair has been "in" with the "Rachel" look

being demanded by 70 per cent of all young women, and now the Geri Spice Girl streaks seem to be taking the lead. Who has a perm now? Aerobic instructors and insurance clerks and people who drive white jeeps.

Split Ends
But some top hairdressers are confident that perms are back, but not as we know them. The trend towards big romantic curls is making a comeback on the cat walk and the belief is that

the curly look will eventually filter down. Perms are now designed to give volume to thinning roots. Modern perms are safer and more natural ingredients are used, although it still takes a couple of hours rolling the hair up into tiny curlers, sitting with cotton wool around your head and rinsing the smell of it out for days but, if you persevere, one day you could look like Ailsa from *Home and Away*.

Victoria Barrett

WEATHER

Most of England and Wales will have another mainly dry day with a good deal of sunshine once any early mist and low cloud have cleared, although an isolated shower is possible over the hills. It will become very warm inland, but the coasts will be cooler with onshore breezes and there may be some troublesome sea-fog in the south-west. Scotland and Northern Ireland will also be warm with hazy sunshine, but western areas will turn cloudy later with a threat of rain by evening.

Tomorrow, western Scotland and Northern Ireland will have sunny spells and just isolated showers after any remaining overnight rain has cleared away. Elsewhere there will be more cloud than recently with a risk of showers and local thunder, but it will be quite hot in the south and east. Early next week most places will have plenty of warm sunshine and just isolated showers, but more general cloud and light rain may reach western Scotland and Northern Ireland later.

General Situation and Outlook:

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Lighting-up Times

Today	Tomorrow
London 8:21pm to 5:48am	London 8:19pm to 5:50am
Bristol 8:31pm to 5:58am	Bristol 8:29pm to 6:01am
Birmingham 8:31pm to 5:58am	Birmingham 8:29pm to 6:01am
Manchester 8:39pm to 5:52am	Manchester 8:33pm to 5:54am
Newcastle 8:37pm to 5:54am	Newcastle 8:35pm to 5:56am
Glasgow 8:51pm to 5:52am	Glasgow 8:48pm to 5:54am
Belfast 8:53pm to 6:03am	Belfast 8:51pm to 6:05am

Air Quality

Today	Tomorrow
London Moderate	London Moderate
S. England Good	S. England Good
Wales Good	Wales Good
C. England Good	C. England Good
Scotland Good	Scotland Good
N. Ireland Good	N. Ireland Good

High Tides

Location	AM HT	PM HT
London	0.09 6.1	12.44 5.4
Liverpool	10.11 8.5	22.36 9.0
Southampton	8.53 11.9	18.25 12.6
Hull (Albert Dock)	6.07 7.8	17.44 7.9
Greenwich	11.29 3.1	-
Dun Laoghaire	10.42 3.7	22.56 3.9

Sun and Moon

Sun rises	Sun sets	Moon rises	Moon sets
5:47am	8:21pm	6:53pm	3:11am

Full Moon August 18

Europe and The World

World weather yesterday, midday (GMT): c, cloudy; th, thin; fg, fog; hz, haze; m, mist; rain; sn, snow; sun, sun; th, thunder; *previous day's figure at local time.

Location	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Athens	28/82	12/22	100
Auckland	13/55	12/22	100
B. Aires	24/75	12/22	100
Bangkok	37/99	12/22	100
Barcelona	29/84	12/22	100
Beijing	28/82	12/22	100
Bombay	30/86	12/22	100
Brussels	25/77	12/22	100
Budapest	31/88	12/22	100
Cairo	35/95	12/22	100
Cape Town	17/63	12/22	100
Cardiff	25/77	12/22	100
Christchurch	14/57	12/22	100
Copenhagen	24/75	12/22	100
Corfu	29/84	12/22	100
Darwin	30/86	12/22	100
Dhahran	37/99	12/22	100
Florence	32/90	12/22	100
Frankfurt	25/77	12/22	100
Geneva	28/82	12/22	100
Gibraltar	25/77	12/22	100
Helsinki	16/61	12/22	100
Hong Kong	31/88	12/22	100
Istanbul	26/79	12/22	100
Jerusalem	30/86	12/22	100
Jo'burg	20/68	12/22	100
K. Lumpur	34/93	12/22	100
Lisbon	25/77	12/22	100
Los Angeles	24/75	12/22	100
Madrid	33/91	12/22	100
Manila	31/88	12/22	100
Malta	28/82	12/22	100
Melbourne	15/59	12/22	100
Montreal	22/72	12/22	100
Moscow	13/55	12/22	100
Munich	24/75	12/22	100
New York	25/77	12/22	100
Nicosia	28/82	12/22	100
Paris	27/81	12/22	100
Perth	24/75	12/22	100
Riyadh	31/88	12/22	100
Rio de Jan	23/73	12/22	100
Sydney	30/86	12/22	100
Tokyo	30/86	12/22	100
Wellington	21/70	12/22	100
Yokohama	25/77	12/22	100

AA Roadwatch

London, A11 Leytonstone. Lane closures at A12 roundabout until August 1999.

London, A306 Hammersmith Bridge. Closed until January 1998.

Sunny, M25 J8-10. Lane closures both ways until further notice.

Bristol, M5 J18-19. Contraflow on Avonmouth Bridge until August 1998.

Swansea, A483 Ffili Way. Lane closures both ways until July 8th.

Staffordshire, A50 Stoke on Trent. Major works at Mer until March 1998.

Leicestershire, A6 Loughborough. Contraflow near M1 J24.

West Midlands, A41 Wolverhampton. Roadworks on Blithen Road until further notice.

Greater Manchester, A627 Bardsley. Temp lights on Ashton Rd.

Merseyside, A567 Bonle. Stanley Rd closed northbound until further notice.

Tyne & Wear, A19 Newcastle area. Roadworks at Killingworth.

West Yorks, M1 J47. Major long-term roadworks until Sept 15.

North Yorks, A19 Thirsk-on-Thames. Roadworks.

Out and about with AA Roadwatch call 0300 401 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association, calls charged at 50p per minute at all times (inc VAT).

The Sky at Night

ANDROMEDA PEGASUS TRIANGULUM ARIES Saturn Pisces Moon

The Moon and Saturn are close in the sky on the night of the 21/22. Here their position is shown at 1.00 a.m. BST for that night.

Over the course of the night, the Moon gradually edges its way below Saturn, closing the gap until there is only half a degree between them at 3.45am. After that they pull apart again. This fine celestial alignment is a foretaste of the encounter to come in the early hours of 12 November, when the Moon will occult Saturn completely for about an hour.

Jacqueline Mitton

TODAY'S TELEVISION

Peter Conchie recommends **Everyman** Sun 10.35pm BBC1

As you are by now no doubt aware, Elvis Aaron Presley died 20 years ago today. Each subsequent anniversary has had its own significance for legions of his lonesome fans. The first brought home the reality of loss for some, the 10th marked a cathartic rite-of-passage from lost hero to legend for others. But for Elvis, the number 20 carries a weightier tag altogether, being roughly his weight in stone when he died.

A repeated *Arena* "The Burger and the King" (Sat BBC2) celebrates Presley's obsession with saturated fat, which grew out of an impoverished Depression childhood, and was fuelled by his adult discovery of cheeseburgers and endless fried peanut-butter-and-banana sandwiches. An unhealthy case of over-compensation for a youthful diet of fried squirrel and chicken feet. This is presumably not the Elvis that his devotees mourn each August, but the interviews with his cooks, room-service adviser and doctor

convince you that, in later life, food really was the only thing that gave him any pleasure. The fact that it took three undertakers to carry him away tells you just how much.

If all that seems to desecrate the sequined shrine of memory, John Peel leads the sermon in the thoroughly entertaining "Elvis and the Presleyans", an *Everyman* special (Sun BBC1), which examines the quasi-religious behaviour of his bereaved fans. Theologian Karen Armstrong describes the phenomena as "a fascinating example of the way a religious enthusiasm grows" explaining the deification of Elvis by his disciples as a function of their ritualistic behaviour, such as the "pilgrimage" to his Graceland home. But claiming that the Gospel is a myth, a mere foretelling of the rising of Elvis, may be as hard to swallow for conventional believers as a stick of celery was for the King. Presley impersonators (most of the later incarnations) are high

priests of a new religion, members of which claim the risen Elvis has been seen. But with all those lookalikes, how would you know you'd seen the right one?

An altogether stronger branch of burgeoning American faith features in the last of the impressive series of *Planet Islam* (Sun BBC2). The fastest growing religion in the US is attracting mostly, the programme suggests, disadvantaged African Americans - in some jails one in three inmates have converted to Islam, Mike Tyson being a recent recruit - and may effect social change in much the same way as the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Islam rejects the melting pot and advocates the mixing bowl; an independent, self-sufficient identity is the aim, with black Muslims encouraged to set up businesses to staunch the haemorrhage of money from inner-city communities.

In a new series, *Stories of the Raj* (Sat C4), the hyperactive

William Dalrymple (a cross between Clive Anderson, Jonathan Meades and a puppy) presents "Blood on the Tracks", Indian Partition as seen from the perspective of Lahore railway station. Muslims and Hindus fleeing to India clashed bloody with Muslims arriving in Pakistan at the interchange and on trains across a genuinely divided nation. Dalrymple's elegant script clashes irritatingly with his *Just William* style of presentation, but that's a quibble; the unifying but ultimately divisive role of the railway in Indian history is beautifully clear.

In contrast, complete confusion is the usual state for Bridget Jones, as readers of her fictional, unattached-thirtysomething column in this paper will be aware. In *Bookworm* (Sun BBC1), the mad singleton's creator, Helen Fielding, gamely denies that she and her creation are one and the same. But when the author drools Jones-like over Colin Firth's Mr Darcy, you're not so sure.

BBC 1

- 7.00 *Harry and the Hendersons* (R/S) (T) (7569974).
- 7.25 *News, Weather* (T) (2917448).
- 7.30 *Baba* (R) (444351).
- 7.55 *Albion 5th Musketeer* (R/S) (T) (4402784).
- 8.20 *The Flintstones* (R) (1463500).
- 8.45 *Marvel Action Hour*. Animation triple bill (R/S) (244516).
- 9.45 *Grange Hill* (R/S) (T) (742968).
- 10.15 *Sweet Valley High* (S) (5085239).
- 10.35 *The O Zone* (S) (3569697).
- 11.00 *The Adventures of Milo and Otis* (Masoni Haba 1989 Jap). Pat animation, narrated by Dudley Moore (T) (424806).
- 12.12 *Weather* (S) (4561429).
- 12.15 *Grandstand*. Introduced by Ray Stubbs (S) (4480500). 12.20 *Football Focus* (6944055). 1.00 *News* (T) (51297055). 1.05 *Cricket Focus*. A preview of the final Test between England and Australia (1054239). 1.30 *Showjumping*. The Speed Derby at Hickstead (98773968). 1.55 *Racing from Newbury* (6885705). 2.10 *Showjumping from Hickstead* (70127061). 2.25 *Racing from Newbury*. 2.30 *Sweetenham Stud St Hughes Stakes* (70122516). 2.40 *Golf: The Westabix Women's British Open* (1544974). 2.55 *Racing from Newbury* (3017245). 3.10 *Golf* (4782968). 4.40 *Final Score* (1480974).
- 5.20 *News, Weather* (T) (9783790).
- 5.30 *Local News, Weather* (603177).
- 5.35 *Cartoon* (488429).
- 5.45 *Ghost Dad* (Sidney Poitier 1990 US). Bill Cosby plays an estranged father given a second chance with his children when he is killed and comes back as a ghost. With a title like this, you know not to expect too much (S) (9904351).
- 7.10 *Confessions*. Simon Mayo meets a man who lied about his age more than 50 years ago, in order to marry. Which makes you wonder how many whoppers were told to secure a commission for this lumbering load of old tosh (S) (397528).
- 7.50 *The National Lottery Live*. Bob Monkhouse with no doubt the wrong six numbers, backed by music from Jai (S) (T) (244861).
- 8.10 *Buzz* (S) (T) (923251).
- 9.00 *Next Door* (Tony Bill 1994 US). Lecturer James Woods unwisely squabbles with his neighbour, Randy Quaid, who happens to be a butcher (S) (4158).
- 10.30 *News, Sport, Weather* (T) (303968).
- 10.50 *Songs and Visions*. A spectacular Elvis event from Wembley, featuring Rod Stewart, Toni Braxton, Robert Palmer, kd lang, Mary J Blige, Chaka Khan, Seal, Steve Winwood and Jon Bon Jovi (35373806).
- 1.20 *Top of the Pops* (S) (T) (4815659).
- 1.50 *Weather* (9776653). To 1.55am.
- REGIONS. NL 5.30 - 5.35 *Newsline*. Scot 5.20 *Afternoon Sports*. 5.30 - 5.35 *Reporting Scotland*. 10.50 *Sports*. Match of the Day. Wales. 4.55 - 5.20 *Wales* on Saturday. 5.30 - 5.35 *Wales Today*.

BBC 2

- 6.20 *Open University: The Rinnucini Chapel*, Florence (T) (8849087).
- 6.45 *From Snowdon to the Sea* (9200177).
- 7.10 *A Europe of the Regions* (T) (3338974).
- 8.00 *Open Saturday* (818413).
- 10.30 *The Man in the Hat* (Michael Curtiz 1959 US). Plodding murder mystery with Alan Ladd (42088005).
- 12.05 *Hancock's Half Hour* (R) (7117239).
- 12.30 *Follow That Dream* (Gordon Douglas 1962 US). Bog-standard army-vet-in-Florida Elvis vehicle (T) (90587500).
- 2.15 *Jailhouse Rock* (Richard Thorpe 1957 US). A song every 15 minutes in this tale of a hot-headed Elvis taken under the wing of a fellow con. Mickey Shaughnessy plays Fletcher to the King's Godfather (T) (813322).
- 3.50 *It Happened at the World's Fair* (Norman Taurog 1963 US). Elvis Presley falls in love with a nurse and sings a song or two (T) (294516).
- 5.35 *Elvis - A Beginner's Guide*. Jayne Middlemiss introduces a 10-minute Elvis crammer (S) (306871).
- 5.45 *TOTP 2* (S) (813603).
- 6.35 *Arena*. See Preview, above (R/S) (T) (499332).
- 7.30 *News and Sport, Weather* (T) (494061).
- 7.40 *Summer Dance*. Sylvie Guillem stars with Nickle Ek in the acclaimed *Smoke*, a bold dance duet by Swedish choreographer Mats Ek. Using music by Arvo Part, they explore the relationship between a man and a woman in two pas de deux (R/S) (714177).
- 8.10 *The Dynasty: the Nehru-Gandhi Story*. When Indira Gandhi was assassinated by Sikh militants, her son Rajiv took power. He championed anti-apartheid and sought to bring peace to Sri Lanka, but suicide bombers took his life. Concluding part (S) (T) (890993).
- 9.00 *Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads?* (R) (T) (1871).
- 9.30 *Our Friends in the North*. The fifth instalment and it's 1974 - Gordie finds himself in jail, Nicky is planning a revolution from a sausage factory, and Toker and Mary's marriage isn't all it could be (R/S) (T) (430650).
- 10.40 *Arena*. A tribute from the consistent documentary strand to the American writer William Burroughs, who died earlier this month at the age of 83. Filmed over a five-year period, it includes contributions from Allen Ginsberg, Frank Zappa, Laurie Anderson, Francis Bacon and Burroughs' son, William Jr (6388852).
- 12.10 *The Man With the Golden Arm* (Otto Preminger 1955 US). Frank Sinatra shines as a professional card-dealer struggling with heroin addiction in Preminger's ground-breaking masterpiece on a then taboo subject. Eleanor Parker plays his embittered wife who persuades him to go back to his old job despite his plans to become a jazz drummer. With Kim Novak as an enticing neighbour (681678). To 2.10am.
- REGIONS. Wales. 9.00 *Elvis - A Beginner's Guide*. 9.10 *TOTP 2*. 10.00 *Our Friends in the North*. 11.10 - 12.40 *Arena*.

ITV/LWT

- 6.00 *GMTV*. 6.00 *News*. 6.10 *Professor Bubble*. 6.30 *Barney and Friends*. 6.50 *Our House*. 7.10 *Gummi Bears*. 7.40 *Disney's Wake Up in the Wild Room*. 8.50 *Big Ben*. 9.00 *Big Ben*. 9.10 *Big Ben*. 9.20 *Big Ben*. 9.30 *Big Ben*. 9.40 *Big Ben*. 9.50 *Big Ben*. 10.00 *Big Ben*. 10.10 *Big Ben*. 10.20 *Big Ben*. 10.30 *Big Ben*. 10.40 *Big Ben*. 10.50 *Big Ben*. 11.00 *Big Ben*. 11.10 *Big Ben*. 11.20 *Big Ben*. 11.30 *Big Ben*. 11.40 *Big Ben*. 11.50 *Big Ben*. 12.00 *Big Ben*. 12.10 *Big Ben*. 12.20 *Big Ben*. 12.30 *Big Ben*. 12.40 *Big Ben*. 12.50 *Big Ben*. 1.00 *Big Ben*. 1.10 *Big Ben*. 1.20 *Big Ben*. 1.30 *Big Ben*. 1.40 *Big Ben*. 1.50 *Big Ben*. 2.00 *Big Ben*. 2.10 *Big Ben*. 2.20 *Big Ben*. 2.30 *Big Ben*. 2.40 *Big Ben*. 2.50 *Big Ben*. 3.00 *Big Ben*. 3.10 *Big Ben*. 3.20 *Big Ben*. 3.30 *Big Ben*. 3.40 *Big Ben*. 3.50 *Big Ben*. 4.00 *Big Ben*. 4.10 *Big Ben*. 4.20 *Big Ben*. 4.30 *Big Ben*. 4.40 *Big Ben*. 4.50 *Big Ben*. 5.00 *Big Ben*. 5.10 *Big Ben*. 5.20 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fishy frisbee

We identify with the killer whale, the hunter, the thrower of dwarves

David Aaronovitch



In a week that has ended with Dodi's ex-girlfriend (number 1.438) Kelly Fisher – as represented publicly by her hairdresser – threatening to sue the heir to the House of Fayed for breach of promise, one begins to wonder if life is not becoming unsatisfactory. Increasingly people behave as though they were the inventions of Tom Sharpe or Howard Jacobson: You can buy curry-flavoured condoms in some public lavatories.

So let us turn with relief to the natural world, where animals and fish, flowers and rocks do not deliberately set out to be silly or peculiar. They do what they do because evolution and environment tells them to. There is no caprice and no whim. Spiny nematodes do not read *The Sun* or *Loaded*.

My attention was drawn to a report on Thursday that marine scientists have discovered schools of killer whales that play frisbee. Really. But these clever mammals are not using plastic frisbees, cast off from hundreds of cruise ships and washed up in killer whale-land. They use stingrays. Coming up from underneath these large flat fish, lifting them at speed out of the water, and then – with a flick – tossing them at an angle into the air, where the rays possess similar aerodynamic qualities to the frisbee. Rotating quickly, the rays reach quite a high speed, and are often caught at the ends of their involuntary flights by other killer whales, who then – playfully – chuck them back. And – joy! – none of this is being done because the killer whales' publicists have told them it will make great pictures in *Hello!* magazine, or help to sell the latest CD of killer whale noises.

But what I found really interesting about this tale was my own uneasy reaction to it. Far from feeling delighted about more evidence of killer-whale intelligence, the discovery made me think rather the less of the animals.

Please don't accuse me of being a natty-patty goody-two-shoes towner, who does not realise that all wild

animals exist in a harsh world in which they are forced to be "nasty". I know there might be a perfectly good reason for this frisbee fun. But I still have a problem with the idea of "playing" with other live creatures without their own active participation. The ray does not choose to be skimmed, any more than the bear chooses to be baited, or the fox hunted. The illustrations from *Alice in Wonderland*, depicting her playing croquet with a flamingo and a hedgehog, have always struck me as cruel. As a child I used to construct a maze of tunnels out of boxes and cushions for Monty the rat to run through. But it always made me feel guilty that – left to himself – Monty never wanted to play. And the ancient country sport of dwarf-throwing has nearly died out because of distaste for what it implies about our attitudes.

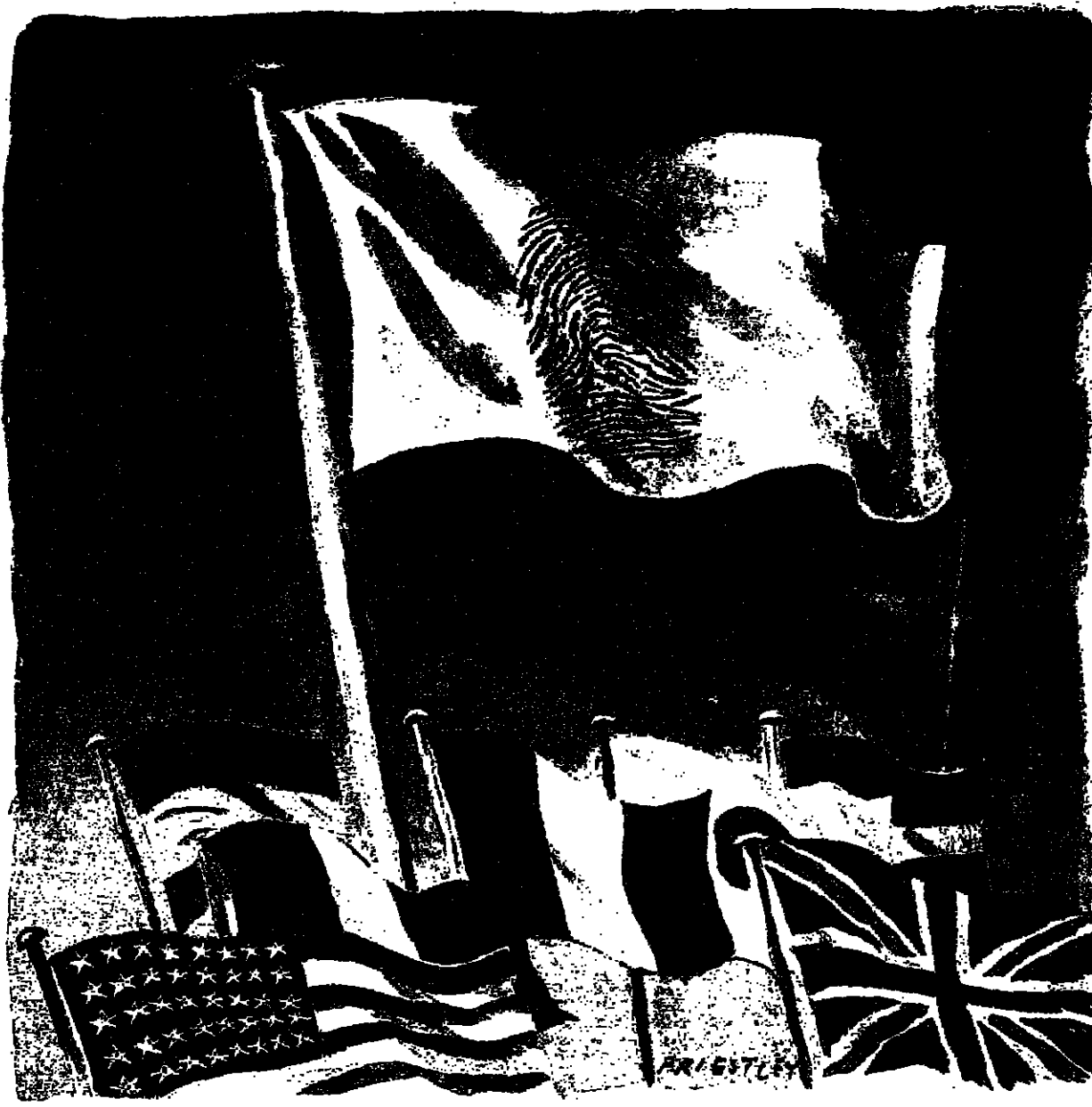
Feel this initial reaction away, however, and something nearly as pernicious lies underneath. For although our sympathies may conceivably be with the persecuted object of the game, our association is almost invariably with the persecutor – the active player. We identify with the killer whale, the hunter, the baiter, the thrower of dwarves. "You belittle yourselves", we say. "By doing this undignified and cruel thing to a fellow sentient being! Desist!"

Well, fine. But shouldn't we try to stand in the shoes of the other party to the game as well? After all, if a big bloke should not throw a dwarf, then it is also true that a dwarf ought not to be thrown. And let us slip into the turquoise waters of a warm ocean alongside the ray, and wonder what it feels like to be wafted around the sandy shallows, minding your own business, looking for things to sting, when suddenly you find yourself flying through the Pacific air at high speed. It may very well be completely disorienting. Indeed, some unprepared rays may suffer significant trauma as a consequence.

Put like that, I am sure you will agree that the affairs of Dodi Fayed seem insignificant in comparison.

The Union flag has had its day in the sun

by Trevor Phillips



'Why shouldn't every home have its own flag-post with both a national flag and a family flag? Mine would be particularly confusing, I'm afraid ...'

If you are reading this column, you are probably among those far-sighted Britons who have worked out that global warming has made the foreign holiday in summer redundant. Even if you are high-minded and think that meeting foreigners broadens your horizons, it is still best to stay at home. Ibiza is full of booze-fuelled Brits in search of a one-night stand (actually, a whole night may be excessive – for some young Brits one minute is apparently the equivalent of Tropicana sex) and all the foreigners are here. Tony Travers, an LSE don, who knows more about this sort of thing than most, points out that if you want to meet the rest of the world in August, you don't need to waste your money in Italy, France, Spain, Japan or the United States. Just take a stroll down Regent Street in London. All humanity is there. Granted, wherever they come from they are wearing Levis and T-shirts made in Korea, and carrying cameras made in Japan, but the street is a horizontal Tower of Babel. Thank God, I say. They may be taking our manufacturing jobs, but frankly if we can dip our hands in their pockets to the tune of several billion a year, fair exchange is no robbery. And with all respect to those who have worked themselves up into rage over the British Tourist Authority's perfectly sensible plan to update its image, these people do not come to the UK to gaze adoringly at the Union flag – they want to experience our countryside, visit our stately homes, and above all they want to spend oodles of cash on our culture and arts, particularly in London.

I know that those leaping to the defence of the Union flag regard themselves as patriots but they need to consider this: is it more patriotic to have a huge flag and no tourists, or a small flag and millions of cash-rich visitors? You don't need three A-levels to work that one out. But even clever people like Brian Sewell and Peter Mandelson have been induced to talk about this piece of second-rate 19th-century design as though it were sacrosanct. I do not expect most people to be vexillogically literate, but even the newest wolf cub could tell you that this flag is less than 200 years old, having first appeared in 1801. Even then it was only one of several possible patriotic symbols. Horror of horrors: the symbol of British pride is junior to Old Glory, the American flag, the first version of which was hoisted in June 1777.

The flag worshippers would have a slightly stronger case if we as a nation behaved as though we cared about the thing. Americans salute their flag, and they are constitution-

ally entitled to lock you up if you show disrespect to it. The South Africans, having invented a new flag, decreed that it must be displayed above any other flag; by law, you cannot use it as a tablecloth or to start or finish a race, and on no account must it ever touch the floor or the ground. Australians have had an acrimonious debate about changing their flag to recognise that country's multiculturalism and its debt to the Aboriginal peoples. Many Aussies want to reduce the importance of the Union emblem that sits in their flag's vexillogical honour point, the top left-hand corner as you look at it, in order to mark their growing distance from the Crown. The debate became so

passionate last year that the Australian government was forced to placate opponents of change with a law establishing that the flag could only be changed by referendum. The British, on the other hand, have allowed the flag to become a marketing tool for the Spice Girls and Oasis; most of us have no clue whether it is being flown the right way up or not; and we stood by when fascist thugs used it as a symbol of resistance to diversity in our society.

What the British Tourist Authority has cottoned on to is that for the past 10 years, our flag has been seen abroad principally on the flabby arses of lager-swilling louts or around the shoulders of shaven-

headed football hooligans. Far from being the banner of our national pride, it has been a symbol of our shame.

The critics of the British Tourist Authority really must think a bit harder. Flags have long been used as a mark of tribal, national, and military identity. The first to use them in this way were the Chinese. For some reason best known to the Zhou dynasty, their troops carried a white flag for nearly a thousand years from around 1100BC. (Maybe their opponents kept thinking the battle was over, only to find themselves massacred by the Zhou gang, and that's how they lasted so long.) The Romans had a flag for every division of every legion. In feudal times,

each individual noble or knight had his own pennant, and carried it into battle. The idea of a single national flag is really less than two centuries old, and most have changed design over that period as what they represented changed.

The Union flag now represents what people call our "national identity" less accurately than ever. Unfortunately, the very term "national identity" is a red herring. It is

principally an invention of European leaders desperate to unite warring statelets in what is now Germany and Italy. That is not to say we do not share traditions and heritage, but we do have to distinguish between these two things on the one hand and identity on the other. Traditions are about history – rituals, practices and symbols shared by a group of people over centuries – the monarchy, for example. Heritage comes with birth – land, genes – and is therefore a matter of biology and geography; it can of course be shared by families, clans and tribes. But in the modern world identity is, inevitably, about psychology – an individual property, which in itself can change according to our situation. For example, at our children's school concerts we are principally parents; at football we can be, if we are lucky, part of the Chelsea tribe; we may at other times identify with our city. The point is that the modern Briton, the modern European, is an amalgam of tradition, heritage and personal identity.

Given what we know of the mood in the country, it would make far more sense in 21st-century Britain to fly the Scottish saltire, the Welsh Dragon, the Cross of St Patrick and the Cross of St George separately, to recognise the fact that in so far as the people of the British Isles identify with any nation, it is with people who share their traditions and their heritage, be those Scottish, Welsh, Irish or English.

And we should go further: why should aristocrats and members of the House of Lords be the only people with symbols that are theirs alone? Why shouldn't every home have its own flag-post with both a national flag and a family flag?

Mine would be particularly confusing, I'm afraid – dominated by the London skyline, perhaps on a background of Atlantic Blue to represent my family's crossing from Africa to the Caribbean, then the Caribbean to Britain; a bit of Guyanese rainforest, with a Scottish thistle rampant; topped by the journalists' contemporary symbol, the quartered flag of Microsoft Windows, crossed with a battered old trumpet. One of these outside every home and what a riot of colour our streets would become; and what better way to dance on the grave of that rotting, constricting and stagnant hangover from the 19th century, the nation state.

Self-deprecation is the New Lassism

Let me introduce myself. I'm 28, my career is reasonably successful and I do have a boyfriend. There, apparently, end my credentials for writing for publication. For there is an ever-growing list of young women who appear to be employed solely to write about chaotic, unsatisfactory love lives: Kathryn Flett in *The Observer*, Emily Barr in *The Guardian*, Topaz Amoore in *The Express*, Anna Bhundy in *The Times*, Emma Forrest for a while in *The Independent*, Zoë Heller until recently in *The Sunday Times*, to name a few. I can count only one weekly female columnist who is allowed to suggest that women under 30 can have an idea, not just a lack of love life.

It is all deeply personal, often quite emotional stuff. Ms Flett, for example, has achieved notoriety by writing painfully raw pieces about the end of her short marriage – and by doing so, attracted far more attention than she did when writing about urban life.

There is a similar trend in publishing: witness the publicity given to Kathryn Harrison's book about her incestuous affair with her father, Susanna Kaysen's *Girl, Interrupted*, about her mental illness, or Elizabeth Wurtzel's battle with Prozac. These are also young, attractive women with dysfunctional lives, the difference being that their lives are presented as excep-



Jojo Moyes

Everyday stories of sexual, marital, drug-fuelled angst. Must female writers really wash their dirty laundry in public?

tional, while the newspaper columnists tell us that their lives are the norm.

What unites them all is a willingness to admit to failure. In the books there are serious journeys through big issues (drugs, incest, mental illness); in the columns, more usually, jokey, continuing series of low-level disappointments. Look how I sabotage my relationship! Look how my boyfriend doesn't love me back! Laugh with me as I joke about my drinking habits, my slovenly flat, my desperate, unfulfilled need to have children!

For these women, no problem, no personal trauma is deemed unsuitable to put into print. Written humorously, they somehow avoid humiliating themselves – self-deprecation takes the bite out of any charges of self-indulgence.

But charges of self-indulgence are unlikely when the use of the word "I" has become so acceptable. The confessional is the *modus operandi* of our time, in which the distinctions between the public and private spheres have become blurred. We are not unsettled when we hear about Ms Wurtzel's sexual failures, despite her being a total stranger, because we have heard it all many times before: on television, in the problem pages of magazines, in the tabloids' kiss-and-tell. It is what the readers want, after all.

These self-revelatory columns are the broadsheet news-

paper's acceptable bite into the tabloid cherry. They allow readers a prurient look into someone else's love life without any of the moral discomfort. Who can complain when the exposé is voluntarily doing the exposing?

But to be ghouls at the feast, or eye-witnesses to the breakdown of Ms Flett's marriage, demeans us and her. It is like the pictures of Princess Diana kissing Dodi Fayed – we all look, while secretly not liking ourselves for doing so.

Admittedly, not all pain is best kept private. Ms Flett has argued, in her defence, that the phenomenal response to her revelations shows that there is a demand for this type of writing. This is not dissimilar to tabloid editors' arguments about paparazzi pictures and circulation. But after the attention has died down, will she really feel glad to have washed that dirty laundry in public? And when Ms Flett's life has achieved a semblance of balance again, who will be as interested to hear the sequel?

Zoë Heller's column, widely acknowledged to be the forerunner of the vogue, was the best-written – but Ms Heller had the sense to realise that there is a limit. Exposing herself in print week after week, she acknowledges, left her open to claims that she was little more than the bag of neuroses presented in her writing. She also grew tired of

receiving letters from deranged nutters who – rightly or wrongly – believed that they knew her intimately from her writings.

But the columns keep on coming. The advent of Bridget Jones in this paper provides the apotheosis of this genre. The fact that the author Helen Fielding's creation was a fictional send-up did not prevent the resulting book from becoming a best-seller. But the use of Jones to extend the self-revelatory should be like the use of the spoof Mrs Merton to front a chat show – the ironic conclusion to a discredited format. No real woman could be more hopeless, more unlucky in love – and, most importantly, more entertaining – than Jones. All other columns now look like pale imitations of the imitation itself.

The response to Bridget Jones shows how the distinction between fact and fiction has become blurred. Too often, one has the feeling that these writers beef up their own mishaps, their own unhappinesses, in order to make their lives saleable. After all, nobody wants to read about the smooth lives of those whom Jones calls the "smug marrieds".

Perhaps it is all a light-hearted bit of fun; a diversion from the serious stuff. But whether it is love or lasagne, the popularity of this genre suggests that women are still rooting themselves firmly in the

emotional/domestic sphere. The safety zone. And it is unlikely to stop: newspapers are targeting young women readers, and this, they have decided, is what we want to read.

One editor (married, two children) told me that he reads these columns religiously, as they offer "a window into another world". But, like New Laddism, they are a construct fondly imagined by the middle-aged to be a widespread phenomenon – one which makes people like him feel comfortable. These girls may be coming up at a rate of knots, but they are still a mess underneath.

Meanwhile, young women like myself are being done a disservice. We have good careers, mortgages, tax returns, viewpoints; there is more to us than our love lives. But we are left to conclude that it would be less controversial for us to drop our knickers in public than to expose the odd brain cell.

Readers of confessional columns are left with the impression that the way to succeed, if you are young, female, intelligent and want to write, is to broadcast your own failures. You are somehow much less threatening – much more likeable – when putting yourself down. Perhaps I just don't get the joke. But before I am accused of humourlessness, let me ask one question: how many young men do you see writing the same stuff?

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Simon: utterly unpredictable

The students loved him. When in the 1960s students wanted more say in the organisation of their programmes, I had to organise a straw vote

Richard Coggins

Ulrich Ernst Simon, theologian: born Berlin 21 September 1913; ordained deacon 1938, priest 1939; University Lecturer, King's College London 1945-60, Reader in Theology 1960-72, Professor of Christian Literature 1972-80, Dean 1978-80; married 1949 Joan Westlake (two sons, one daughter); died London 31 July 1997.

John Westwood

Meccano Magazine, August 1930. Lansley joined the magazine in 1923, aged 16. Seven years later he set up his own Meccano shop

That's just not true. I heard this week about a businessman who kept a postcard of a Suffolk church by his desk; he said the memento of his visit helped to sustain him through the rest of the year. I heard, too, about a magazine editor whose betrothed went to immense trouble to arrange their wedding in a Lake District church which had been fixed in his mind since a childhood visit. The influence of these intense moments can be long-lasting. Even in these secular times, it seems, holidays can still be holy days.

bill, poet, 1678; George Herman "Babe" Ruth, baseball player, 1948; Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell, author of *Gone With the Wind*, 1949; Belsa Elviro (Belsa Blasko), actor, 1956; Elvis Aaron Presley, rock singer, 1977; Stewart Granger, actor, 1993. On this day: the Jesuits were expelled from Rome, 1773; the Peterloo Massacre took place at St Peter's Field, Manchester, 1819; the trial of Queen Caroline for adultery began, 1820; the Great Exhibition, London, opened, 1871; Britain applied for membership of the EEC, 1961. Today is the Feast Day of St Armel, St Arsacius and St Stephen of Hungary.

TOMORROW: Births: John III, King of Poland, 1629; Dawy Crockett, frontiersman, 1768; Mae West, actress, 1892; Beatrice Friedlander, 1904; Gertrude Stein, 1904; George Bernard Shaw, 1866; Constantine Balzak, novelist, 1859; Iris Gerstein (Israel Gerstein), lyricist, 1933; Walter Richard Rudolf Hess, Hitler's former deputy, 1887. On this day: Cromwell's army was victorious at the Battle of Preston, 1646; the Berlin Wall fell, 1989; the East and West Berlin began, 1961. Tomorrow is the Feast Day of St Clare of Montefalco, St Eusebius, pope, St Hyacinth, St Joan Delanoue, St Liberatus of Cepus, St Mamas and St Roch or Roch.

0171-293 2012) or fixed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, forthcoming marriages, Marriages) must be submitted in writing (or fixed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Changing of the Guard
TODAY: The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. **TOMORROW:** The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am; Nijmegen Company, Grenadier Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, hand provided by the Irish Guards.



He became a senior captain of the Anchor Line and was master of its last passenger ship, the *Ehya*. He retired in 1975 in the age of new technology, by which time he could pinpoint his position anywhere in the world to within 20 yards at the push of two buttons. However he spoke of having started his life at sea on an open

His pregnant wife Nina, a sister in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Service, was told he was missing on the night the Clydebank blitz wreaked havoc close to their home in Greenock. She received the news that he had survived on Easter Day, and it later emerged that 200 people, half of those aboard *Britannia*, had survived.

McVicar was born at Southend, Mull of Kintyre, in 1914, a son of the manse, the third in a family of five sons and a daughter, and was educated at Campbeltown Grammar School. He joined the merchant navy as a cadet aged 17. At the end of the Second World War, he resumed his lifelong career, with the (now long defunct) Anchor Line, sailing all over the world from

bridge with no aides to navigation apart from compass, sextant and charts.

William "Mac" McVicar died peacefully at his home in Troon, Ayrshire, a stone's throw from his beloved sea.

Campbell Thomas

William McVicar, merchant seaman: born Southend, Mull of Kintyre 12 May 1914; married Nina Tawse (three daughters);

Campbell Thomas

William McVicar, merchant seaman: born Southend, Mull of Kintyre 12 May 1914; married Nina Tawse (three daughters);

One of the grossly overloaded boats, carrying 82 sur-

market report / shares

Taking Stock

US rates could now decide the future of the bull run

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year



A Friday afternoon in the holiday season with many market men, including experienced players, away from their offices presented an ideal environment for what amounted to a rout in a vacuum.

The stories going the rounds ranged from big sell programmes with institutions allegedly switching into second lines and taking a big investment house was dumping stock ahead of a downturn review of blue chips.

There was, of course, some profit taking.

Many market men confessed they were puzzled by a crash without reason or substance. Said one: "It's some-

thing of a mystery. Nothing has happened to spook the market. Many feel a correction is necessary but the nature and speed of the fall is astonishing."

It will be interesting to see whether the market adopts a more resilient attitude on Monday. If further weakness occurs - and US interest rates could go up next week - then the great bull run could be over.

Amid the mayhem second and third liners kept their cool. The FTSE 250 index edged ahead; so did the FTSE SmallCaps index. They were, however, not immune from the demoralising behaviour of their peers and finished below

their best. Among supporting shares ending higher were Greenalls, the hotels and pubs chain, 10.5p to 487.5p, and Psion, the computer group, 15p to 376.5p.

Financials, which led the blue-chip charge, took a battering. HSBC, ruffled by higher Hong Kong interest rates and the biggest share fall since the Chinese took over, fell 166.5p to 2,167.5p. It alone accounted for 16 points of Footsie's fall.

Associated British Foods, on talk it could lead a break-up bid for struggling Dalgety, lost 38.5p to 498.5p and B&K, as Sam Chisholm's swan song failed to please, lost 33p to 437p.

On such a day blue chip flyers were few and far between. National Grid, with a 2.4 per cent advance to 256p, topped the pile. Significantly, BTR made further headway, up 1p to 215p.

Alliance & Leicester re-

flected solid interim figures and talk it is near to making an acquisition with an 8p bid to 620.5p.

Kidco, the computer games group, crashed 102.5p to 447.5p following a widening first-quarter loss and allegations regulators were investigating share dealings.

Proving a day is a long time in the market Graystone, an engineer, said bid talks were off. On Thursday it issued a statement that the negotiations, started a month ago, were continuing. With the company adding that figures would not meet market hopes the shares more than halved to 39p.

A warning from ABI Leisure, the caravan group, that a forecast two weeks ago of profits of £4.5m was wrong and the group would suffer a loss, knocked the shares 27p to 38p; Portmerion Potteries was smashed 65p to 430p on a cautious trading statement.

Metrolite, the chemical group, is keeping an eagle eye on its shares. Last month it said it was unable to explain a fall which took its price from 35p to 29.5p.

Yesterday it was again unable to account for a decline from 29p to 25.5p and said trading was satisfactory and ahead of budget.

In the year to end-March the company produced profits of £226,000, up from £106,000. A few years ago it approached £3m.

Celtic, the Glasgow football club selling more season tickets than any other club in Britain, scores with stockbroker Greig Middleton.

Analyst Nick Batram forecasts profits of £5m followed by £6.6m and thinks he is being cautious.

He does not expect a dividend. The shares held at £315.

Data Bank

FTSE 100 4865.8 -125.5

FTSE 250 4888.2 +8.3

FTSE 350 2355.9 -48.2

SEAQ VOLUME 805.9m shares

45,487 bargains

Crisis Index 175

Share spotlight

Greenalls

PSION

National Grid

BTR

Alliance & Leicester

Kidco

Graystone

Metrolite

Celtic

ABI Leisure

Portmerion Potteries

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Kidco

business & city

FINANCIAL JOURNAL
OF THE YEAR

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098
DEPUTY BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: MICHAEL HARRISON

Footsie sheds 2.5% as second-liners bounce back

Tom Stevenson
Financial Editor

Investors turned their backs on the stock market's high-flying blue chip shares yesterday, subjecting the FTSE 100 index to its biggest one-day fall since the stock market crash of 1987. The damage was restricted to the top flight, however, as investors poured money into the exchange rate-sensitive second-liners which are expected to

benefit most from the recent easing in the strength of the pound.

The 125.5-point fall recorded by the FTSE 100 index of leading shares was driven by a slump in the banking sector which has driven the market's rise so far this year and become the index's most powerful force. So important have financial stocks become, that a 166.5p fall in the price of HSBC accounted for 16 points of the FTSE

100's fall by itself. Few dealers had an explanation for yesterday's dramatic decline, after a week in which economic data in the UK and US were surprisingly benign. Fears of interest rate rises in America were put on hold by figures showing consumer prices growing at their slowest rate for 11 years.

The FTSE 250 index of stocks falling just outside the market's 100 largest, rose yesterday by 8.3 points to 4698.2 as

investors focused on better prospects for the country's exporters following a fall in the value of the pound and comments this week from the Bank of England suggesting further weakness is likely.

Leading stocks were given a lead by Hong Kong's Hang Seng index, which fell 400 points to 16,096.9 after three-month leading rates in the former colony rose to 9 per cent, their highest since 1995. That hit

HSBC, which has extensive shareholdings in the Hong Kong market, especially hard.

Afternoon dealing was further depressed by weakness on Wall Street, which was 122.6 points lower within minutes of the opening bell in New York.

The volatility of the FTSE 100 index, which closed at 4,865.8 yesterday, is certain to open up the debate about how good a yardstick of UK investment sentiment it now is.

Its fortunes and those of the rest of the UK's more than 3,000 quoted companies have become increasingly divergent this year.

Despite an 18.1 per cent rise in the value of the FTSE 100 index since the beginning of the year, the FTSE 250 index has risen only 4.6 per cent. Yesterday's movements confirmed the belief of an increasing number of investors that any remaining value in the stock

market is in the second-liners and Small Cap constituents, which were also unfazed by the turmoil in the larger stocks.

Smaller stocks, which include many manufacturing companies dependent on overseas end-markets, have benefited from the recent depreciation in the pound, which traded yesterday at DM2.93, against a high last month of DM3.07.

Some smaller companies likely to profit from the fall in

the pound rallied yesterday. Paper and plastics group Bunnings jumped 11.5p, or 5.1 per cent, to 238.5p. Other FTSE 250 constituents to rise included Williams, Ream, BICC and Laird.

Further pressure was put on sterling this week by the Bank of England, which said in its latest quarterly Inflation Report that it expected a further 10 per cent devaluation over the next two years.

Warning mars Chisholm's exit from BSkyB

Cathy Newman

Sam Chisholm yesterday drew a line under his reign at the head of BSkyB, the satellite giant, as he made his final presentation of the company's results. But his finale was marred by concerns over the company's future prospects.

The City voted with its feet, sending Sky's shares plummeting 7 per cent to 437p after Mr Chisholm warned the launch of digital television would knock profits.

At what was at times an emotional presentation, Mr Chisholm repeatedly bemoaned the fact that illness had forced him to step down, but said it would have been "irresponsible" for him to carry on. Likening the launch of digital to mountaineering, he said: "There is no point getting half-way up a mountain and saying 'Look, I don't feel well'. I made the decision to go: it was the responsible thing for me to do."

But his regret at having to leave was always evident, and he paid tribute to his colleagues at the satellite broadcaster. "I have been very proud and delighted to be part of it all," he said. "If it hadn't been for my indifferent health I probably would have stayed on. I envy Mark Booth [his successor] enormously in having the



Mark Booth: Poised to take over at the company

charge to carry this thing forward."

Mr Chisholm, who announced in June that he and his deputy would step down at the end of the year, indicated that maintaining "spectacular" profits after the launch of digital would be unlikely.

"If we took the launch of digital and attendant costs and maintained profits, it would be spectacular," he said. However, Mr Chisholm said, "It is our intention to keep this company in rapid growth."

City analysts pointed out that Sky's profits had been artificially inflated by a £14m gain from Sky's withdrawal from British Digital Broadcasting, and a £7.4m credit from satellite tech-

nology, written off at the time of the merger of BSB and Sky, but now reinstated.

Stripping out these exceptional items, underlying pre-tax profits came in at £292m, below most analysts' expectations of around £305m.

Followers of Sky were also disappointed that Mark Booth, the 40-year-old pretender to Mr Chisholm's crown and head of Rupert Murdoch's Japanese satellite operation JSkyB, was not taking questions at the presentation.

Paul Richards, media analyst at Panmure Gordon, said it would have been helpful to get an idea of Mr Booth's thoughts and the future format of the board.

Mr Richards said Sky's plans for the advent of digital were short on detail, and that the company refused to give details of marketing costs for the launch of the service. "A lack of real news about digital, combined with slightly underwhelming figures pushed the shares down," he said.

Mr Chisholm's ambitions for the company, which he inherited when it was losing £14m a week at the time of the merger with BSB, were undimmed, despite his imminent departure. He said he was confident that Sky, which is taken in one in four homes, had the poten-



Sam Chisholm: Unhappy that illness has prevented him from continuing his role at BSkyB

tial to reach 50 per cent of the market.

Mr Chisholm denied that the resignation of the top two executives had been badly handled, saying that it was a "copy-book handover". However, there was no news on a full-time replacement for Mr Chance,

who takes on a consultancy role after Christmas.

Questioned on his involvement with the company after Christmas, Mr Chisholm said he would stay on the board in a non-executive role, but would probably "do a few days a week at the office". But he joked that

he would still have a hands-on approach to Sky, adding: "Most of my advice comes unsolicited, anyway."

He reserved his final words for the press, with whom he has had a love-hate relationship over the years. He said that his dialogue with the press had

not always been "pleasant" but it had always been "honest", and that "lots of times" Sky had been "criticised with justification."

Sky's share-price has been under siege since Mr Chisholm and Mr Chance announced they were to bow out.

Eidos shares hit by reports

John Willcock

Shares in Eidos, the developer of smash-hit computer game "Tomb Raider", fell by nearly a fifth to 447.5p yesterday following press reports of an investigation by City regulators into share dealings in the company.

However, Charles Cornwall, chairman of Eidos, insisted yesterday that "neither the company nor its advisers were aware of any investigation".

Eidos announced a loss before tax of £4.9m in the three months to the end of June this year, in line with most forecasts. Mr Cornwall said the company was "still on target to make a profit in the year to March 1998."

Mr Cornwall said the company's share price was vulnerable following the decision by Coopers & Lybrand last week not to stand for re-election as Eidos' auditors. They will be replaced by KPMG.

The chairman said Coopers had decided not to stand again because Eidos had failed to comply with several Cadbury Committee guidelines, which had now been rectified. "We had some pretty tense moments with them, but choosing not to stand for re-election is very different to resignation," he said.

The company intends to appoint some new non-executive directors "in the near future" in order to bring it more into line with Cadbury.

Eidos is the world's third largest developer of computer games software and its "Tomb Raider" has sold 2 million copies.

Pearson sells publishing unit for £57m

Cathy Newman

Marjorie Scardino, the chief executive of media conglomerate Pearson, has delivered on one of her promises to weed out non-core businesses by selling part of its medical books division, which publishes *Gray's Anatomy*, in her first big disposal since arriving at the group in January.

The deal promises to be the first of many as Ms Scardino embarks on a wide-ranging shake-up Pearson, the group which controls a diverse set of businesses from the *Financial Times* to leisure attractions such as Madame Tussauds.

Pearson indicated earlier this year that it would put its 50 per cent stake in Lazard Brothers, the merchant bank, up for sale. It is also planning to sell residual stakes in BSkyB and SES, the Luxembourg-based Astra satellite owner.

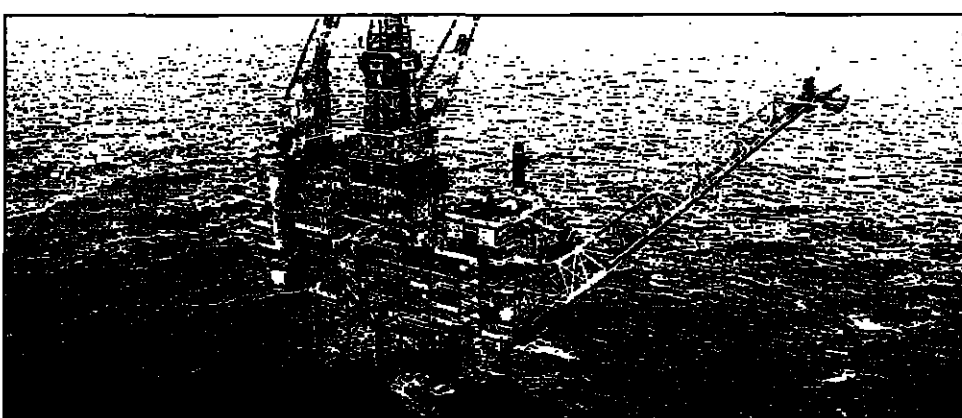
Pearson announced yesterday that it had sold Churchill Livingstone, publisher of the medical textbook, to Harcourt

General, for \$92.5m (£57.5m). Churchill Communications, the other element of Pearson's medical publishing interests, is likely to be disposed of later.

Churchill Livingstone, founded in 1812 and one of the oldest medical publishers in the world, publishes over 1,500 books and CD-Roms, and 70 journals for healthcare professionals. It was acquired by Pearson around 30 years ago, and has almost 200 staff. Its operations are based in the US and the UK.

Peter Warwick, chief executive of Pearson Professional, said: "Our ambition matches that of Pearson as a whole: to have strong positions in our chosen markets. Churchill Livingstone has a highly prestigious list, first-rate authors and excellent, dedicated staff, but we believe our resources can be better deployed in focusing on a smaller number of publishing businesses."

City analysts said that Pearson had secured a fair price for the sale.



Enterprise Oil's Nelson platform (above) has been affected by disposal of the bomb

John Willcock

Enterprise Oil has discovered a Second World War bomb, dropped by a German Luftwaffe pilot, just nine feet from one of its main oil pipelines in the heart of the biggest oil producing area in the North Sea. It has been forced to employ private contractors to remove and blow up the 250kg bomb and will have to close the pipeline for up to five days.

The oil company angrily denied earlier press reports that the Royal Navy had advised it to dismantle part of the pipeline and detonate the bomb where it lay. Enterprise also denied it was risking a large oil spill.

Ron Davis, acting general manager of Enterprise Oil, said: "As soon as we discovered the bomb we approached the

Bomb halts output in North Sea field

Royal Navy and a number of other organisations for advice. They never advised us to dismantle any of the pipeline, and said that exploding the bomb on the spot would be more dangerous than moving it."

The company also said that even though there was minimal risk to the pipeline, it would be filled with water while the bomb was detonated, displacing any risk of an oil spillage.

A private contractor will move the bomb, which is lying in more than 100 metres of water and some 8 kilometres

from its Nelson oil platform, using a remotely controlled submersible operated from a specially modified ship. "The Navy told us 100 metres down in cold water is the safest place for the bomb," Mr Davis added.

Enterprise said the 160,000 barrel-a-day oilfield would be closed for up to five days in an operation expected to take place in the next few weeks. Mr Davis insisted the Navy had advised him the bomb represented only a "minimal risk".

The bomb was detected during a routine annual survey of the pipeline, three kilometres

from British Petroleum's Forties field Echo platform. The area is the biggest producer of oil in the North Sea, and lies between Aberdeen and Scandinavia.

The company said it presumed a trawler had dragged the bomb along the sea bed, since there was no seaweed on its casing. Many bombs were ditched in the sea during the Second World War by German bombers either aborting missions or returning from unsuccessful attacks on cities. Many are encountered on the sea floor by companies laying cables and pipelines, Enterprise said.

The Nelson platform supplies crude as part of the Forties network to Cruden Bay in Scotland. Enterprise said the operation will have no impact on crude supplies from other fields using the Forties system.

Flextech plans Jane Austen centrepiece

Cathy Newman

Flextech, the cable and satellite television company, yesterday unveiled some of the programmes it plans to screen in its new joint venture with the BBC. The centrepiece will be a Jane Austen week before Christmas this year, aimed at marking Flextech as a heritage drama programmer.

Flextech plans to provide three new pay-TV satellite channels by Christmas and to revamp its existing UK Gold channel, offering classic comedy such as *Only Fools and Horses* from the BBC archives.

The collection of Jane Austen films and dramas will be shown on its new Arena channel. Arena will also broadcast "Dennis Potter-style drama", according to insiders. A style channel will feature lifestyle programming like *The Antiques Roadshow*, and the Horizons channel will include documentaries by names such as David Attenborough.

The new UK Gold will also begin transmission by the end of the year. All four channels will be shown on analogue cable and satellite until the launch of digital television next year.

Flextech signed the £200m deal with the BBC earlier this year, promising to create up to eight pay-TV channels to be broadcast on analogue and digital television. Four of these will not now launch until next year.

Under the deal, Flextech put up £22m of equity and up to £188m of debt, in return for getting open access to the BBC's entire programme library.

As he announced results for the six months to the end of June, Roger Luard, Flextech's group chief executive, said the company would save £4m in a year by deciding not to invest any further in European Business News, the business channel. Flextech has poured

£9m into the channel over the last two years.

Mr Luard added that Flextech may sell its 30 per cent stake in EBN. Dow Jones, the American media group which owns the *Wall Street Journal*, EBN's majority shareholder. Reports that EBN and Asia Business News, also owned by Dow Jones, would merge with CNBC have heightened uncertainty over Flextech's future.



Roger Luard: Will save £4m by not investing in EBN

involvement with EBN.

Flextech reported a pre-exceptional loss of £1.7m in the first half, an improvement on the £7.8m loss before exceptional costs it made in the same period last year.

Mr Luard said he was "confident" Flextech was now well-placed for the rapid evolution of the television industry in the coming months and years.

Exceptional charges for the six months to the end of June related to the £1.6m repositioning of the Family Channel as Challenge TV and the £5m launch of the new programming strand, Trouble, aimed at 10-24 years.

However, these charges were partly offset by the £5.9m credit from the disposal of Flextech's 23 per cent stake in HIT Entertainment.

STOCK MARKETS									
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	YTD (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	YTD (%)
FTSE 100	4891.30	-12.30	-0.2	5086.80	4056.80	3.31	5086.80	4056.80	3.31
FTSE 250	4689.90	+12.90	+0.3	4729.40	4386.20	3.54	4729.40	4386.20	3.54
FTSE 350	2404.10	-3.50	-0.1	2438.00	2017.50	3.35	2438.00	2017.50	3.35
FTSE SmallCap	2242.85	+8.55	+0.4	2374.20	2179.29	3.20	2374.20	2179.29	3.20
FTSE All-Share	2346.32	-2.64	-0.1	2376.39	1989.78	3.35	2376.39	1989.78	3.35
New York	7535.06	+8.74	+0.1	8259.31	5032.04	1.61	8259.31	5032.04	1.61
Tokyo	18222.82	+214.02	+1.1	20681.07	17303.85	0.917	20681.07	17303.85	0.917
Hong Kong	16497.71	+14.78	+0.1	16673.27	12056.17	2.717	16673.27	12056.17	2.717
Frankfurt	4231.43	-47.05	-1.1	4438.53	2848.77	1.301	4438.53	2848.77	1.301

Statistics as of 15 August

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond	Money Market Rates	Bond Yields	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
7.08	7.50	7.04	7.83	7.06	7.95	7.95	7.95	7.95	7.95
5.56	5.91	6.29	6.53	6.57	6.47	6.47	6.47	6.47	6.47
0.50	0.59	2.08	3.18	3.18	3.18	3.18	3.18	3.18	3.18
3.13	3.56	5.88	6.29	6.36	6.36	6.36	6.36	6.36	6.36

CURRENCIES									
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	£/A\$	£/NZ\$	£/HK\$	£/SG\$	£/KRW	£/INR	£/RUB
1.5867	0.646	1.5505	0.6302	0.26	0.8450	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6455
1.5895	0.646	1.5494	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6455
2.9232	0.646	1.5494	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6455
187.058	0.646	1.5494	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6455
101.4	0.646	1.5494	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6291	0.23	0.6455	0.6455

Source: Reuters, Bloomberg, and other financial data providers.

A salutary lesson in undergraduate economics

MICHAEL HARRISON

'What Government changes look like encouraging is a further shift away from arts courses to much more vocational degrees.... That will please employers who have long argued that making education more relevant to the world of work would make the biggest single contribution to Britain's competitiveness'

Miles is 18 and lives across the road. This weekend he and his parents, like thousands of others around the country, face a difficult choice. Should he go to university or should he try to get a place this autumn? The financial implications are large. The Government's decision to scrap maintenance grants and start charging tuition fees from next year could leave him with a bill of more than £9,000 when he has finished his three-year geography and economics degree. That is probably about what he will earn during his year off working at one of the big high street banks.

If it is any consolation, his financial position is not as bad as it could be. Miles lives in a nice area (how could it be otherwise?) and his parents, it would be fair to say, are comfortably off. If Miles came from a poorer family, he could, paradoxically, end up with a loan of more than £12,000 to repay after college because of the way the new formula will work.

Behind the dilemma facing Miles and thousands of school leavers like him, there lies, of course, a bigger question. Everyone accepts that there is a funding crisis in higher education. But do you solve it by shifting more of the burden on to parents and students and what will the long-term effects be on the economy?

There are broadly two schools of thought.

One says that higher education ought to remain free. It encourages more people into the system, thereby producing a better educated, more skilled workforce which can only benefit wider society and lead to greater economic prosperity. What's more, the cost of providing free university education is more than covered by the higher taxes university-educated people pay. Start charging fees and you will get fewer applicants.

The other school of thought says this is baloney. Free higher education is just a middle-class subsidy and one paid for, moreover, out of the taxes of the less well-off. Since graduates can earn 20 per cent more than non graduates for doing the same job, surely it is right that they should make some contribution. After all, rights always come attached to responsibilities. Nor is there any evidence that making students pay their way deters them from entering college. Look at the United States and Canada, or the tiger economies of the Pacific Rim, or even Australia and Italy for that matter. All of them charge for higher education and all of them have higher participation rates than Britain. In Canada, for instance, the figure is 44 per cent. Here, it is 33 per cent.

I am with David Blunkett on this one. The Education Secretary is adamant that the changes will not lead to a decline in undergraduate numbers and history suggests he is probably right. In the early 1960s one in

twenty young people entered higher education. Now the figure is one in three, even though government funding has declined, in real terms, by 54bn a year. Over the last decade, public funding per student has fallen by 25 per cent.

I am less persuaded, however, by Mr Blunkett's assurance that his funding revolution will encourage the less well-off to continue into higher education. The explosive growth in higher education in the last 30 years has sucked in better off students at twice the rate of students from socio-economic groups D and E. Saddling the less well off with even bigger debts at the end of their degree courses seems an odd way of encouraging more students from poorer backgrounds.

What the Government's changes do look like encouraging, however, is a further shift away from arts courses to much more vocational degrees. Goodbye BA in Anglo-Saxon History, hello Diploma in Internet Studies. It is surely not a coincidence that the biggest increases in vacancies this year are for courses such as business studies and engineering. That will surely please employers who have long argued that improving the education system and making it more relevant to the world of work would make the biggest single contribution to Britain's competitiveness.

All a bit depressing really: who wants to live in a world dominated by computer nerds

and mechanical engineers obsessed with paying off their student loans and oblivious to the finer things of life?

Is Tony Dye about to be vindicated at long last? Yesterday's 125.5 point fall in the Footsie was the biggest since Black Monday in 1987. Not, of course, in percentage terms, because the Index has more than doubled since then. Anything less than a 100 point retreat is regarded with indifference these days. The other notable aspect about yesterday's market gyrations was how the second liners that make up the FTSE-250 actually rallied as the Footsie headed south. Perhaps this is not surprising since the 250 contains many of the engineers and exporters who have begun to benefit from sterling's depreciation at last.

Nevertheless, investors have been warned. The survey this week of investment intentions by Merrill Lynch clearly showed an increasing number of institutions bailing out of equities and into cash and gilts. They are sceptical about the ability of central banks on either side of the Atlantic to keep interest rates down and worried about the toll that slowing economic growth will take on equity markets.

Both the Dow and the Footsie have retreated since breaking through the magic 8,000 and 5,000 levels respectively. It will require substantially bigger falls than yes-

terday's to put Mr Dye's PDFM back in the money but maybe things are moving in his direction at last. Yields are becoming ridiculously meagre and the pressure is for higher interest rates while the UK market still does not seem to have factored in the abolition of tax credits. Against that background, ordinary investors could easily be forgiven for following the lead of the professionals and moving out of equities.

On the rare occasions that I have used the National Rail Enquiry Service I have found it to be efficient and polite. Apparently that has not been the experience of much of the rest of the country. According to the Rail Regulator John Swift, 20 per cent of enquiries go unanswered and, when callers do get through, they are directed as often as not to services which do not exist and stations which are not open. That's private enterprise for you. Even so it is a big improvement on the figures for when barely half of all calls were being answered. Mr Swift has now come up with a sliding scale of fines which, by my calculation, will land the privatised train operators with a bill of £5m a month if their performance slips back to its level in the Spring. Even this is peanuts, of course, compared with the £8m of subsidies the industry is receiving - enough to pay the NRES's fines for the next 100 years, in fact.

Alliance plans acquisitions or share buy-backs

Tom Stevenson
Financial Editor

Alliance & Leicester, the former building society that floated as a bank in April, said it was on the lookout for acquisitions but promised shareholders it would buy back shares if it failed to find anything to buy at a sensible price. Maiden interim figures yesterday showed it is awash with surplus funds.

Passing its first test since joining the stock market, A&L beat market forecasts with first-half profits before tax of £178m. That represented a fall of 3 per cent on last year's £192m, but included a £28m one-off hit for the costs of conversion and flotation.

Peter White, chief executive, said the results provided a firm base for the rest of the year, but he warned that strong competition in the personal financial services market was likely to intensify.

He added that the level at which interest rates peaked in the current cycle would be crucial in determining how strong the current recovery in the housing market became.

While the group confirmed it would prefer to invest its extra cash in acquisitions or organic growth, it ruled out a purchase overseas. Last week rival Wool-

wich said it foresaw problems making well-priced acquisitions in the UK and was considering "cherry-picking" in France, where valuations are lower.

Richard Pym, finance director, said the rationale behind any deals would either be to acquire an expanded customer base into which it could push its existing products or a company that would expand its fledgling interests in products such as unit trusts and life assurance.

Alliance & Leicester has focused on growing its unsecured lending business, which it believes is of better quality than those of its peers, and it would be keen to push that product through a broader customer base. During the half year, outstanding unsecured loans grew to £1.03bn from £833m. Gross advances during the half of £464m represented a market share of 14.1 per cent.

Mr Pym refused to commit himself to a timetable for any share buy-back should those sorts of acquisitions not be possible, but he admitted that with a capital ratio of almost twice the industry average, A&L was under some pressure to take some action.

Tier 1 capital, which is a measure of a bank's core capital

compared to its total assets, stands at around 14 per cent at A&L, compared with an industry average of about 8 per cent and as low as 6.5 per cent in some cases. An acquisition would be one way of reducing the ratio, while handing cash back to shareholders through a special dividend or share buy-back is another.

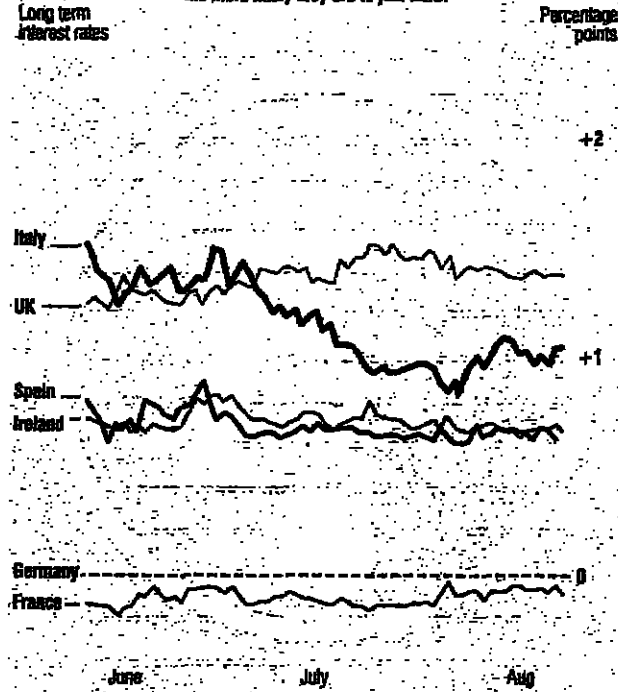
Continued diversification increased profits from outside A&L's core mortgages and savings business to 38 per cent of the total. That was in spite of an increase in gross mortgage advances, which rose 53 per cent to £1.422bn in the six months to June, giving A&L a 4.5 per cent market share.

Profits were given a boost by a reduction in the ratio of costs to income, which slipped from 63.9 per cent to 61.6 per cent. Including the cost of conversion, earnings per share were 19.4p (20.6p), representing a post-tax return on capital of 17.4 per cent.

The shares closed 8p higher on the day at 620.5p, against the trend of the market and the rest of the banking sector, as analysts focused on the potential for continued cost-cutting and cross-selling of products. The dividend was raised 18 per cent to 6.4p, around a third of the expected payout for the full year.

Who will be in EMU? The financial markets' view

The closer other countries get to the dotted baseline (Germany) the more likely they are to join EMU.



TOWARDS EMU: If the line moves towards the German base line it means investors no longer require such a high premium for holding that country's bonds compared to German ones, because they are confident the currency won't devalue against the Mark. In other words, they think that country will be locked into a single currency with Germany in ten years' time.

AWAY FROM EMU: However, if they think the country won't be in EMU, that it will have higher inflation, and that there is a risk of a future devaluation against the Mark, then they will demand an extra premium for holding that country's bonds, so the line will move away from the base.

When will EMU start? The City Analysts' View.

The independent analysts from: Nikko Europe, Prime Wobster, ABN Amro, JP Morgan, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, Salomon Brothers, Goldman Sachs, HSBC, James Capel, UBS.

What probability they placed on EMU starting on time.

Probability EMU starts on time	65%	(85% last week)
Probability EMU is delayed	32%	(32% last week)
Probability EMU never happens	3%	(83% last week)

Possible rate rise boosts the mark

Clifford German

The seasonal fall has descended on Europe, with few discernible events to move markets or sentiment in the past week.

The City dismissed media reports that President Jacques Chirac and Chancellor Helmut Kohl would use the possibility of persuading the UK to join EMU in the first wave as an excuse to delay the starting date, according to Martin Brooks at Goldman Sachs.

The other main talking point remains the possibility of a rise in German interest rates at the weekly repo tender on Tuesday or after the Bundesbank's next council meeting on Thursday.

On purely domestic grounds a rise in German rates could soon be justified as the recent export-led recovery broadens into an upturn in investment, with the possibility of a consumer boom when consumer taxes are cut next year, according to Philip Chitty at ABN Amro. But it would put heavy pressure on France and Italy to follow suit and neither needs a rise in rates on domestic grounds. Avinash Persaud, currency expert at JP Morgan thinks a rise in German rates is not yet justified.

Fortunately, even the possibility of a rise in German rates has helped to achieved the desired effect of strengthening the mark against the dollar.

IN BRIEF

Arnault trades Guinness for Grand Met

Bernard Arnault, the combative Frenchman, has sold 10 million more shares in Guinness, raising £58.5m to fund another stock market assault on Grand Metropolitan in his protracted campaign to scupper the £23bn merger between the two UK drinks companies. LVMH, Mr Arnault's French luxury goods group, has reduced his stake in Guinness to 11.47 per cent and holds 11.1 per cent of Grand Met.

Halifax lifts mortgage rate

Halifax, the UK's largest lender, is increasing its mortgage rate by 0.25 per cent to 8.45 per cent in the wake of the latest quarter-point rise in base rates to 7 per cent. The new rate will apply with immediate effect for new borrowers and from 1 September for existing customers. Nationwide Building Society has also lifted its mortgage rate from September to 8.1 per cent from 7.85 per cent.

ABI Leisure hit by strong pound

ABI Leisure, the caravan manufacturer, issued its second profit warning in as many weeks and parted company with chief executive David Carrick. ABI expects to show a small loss for the year to August due to the strength of sterling. It blamed a breach of internal controls which led to inadequate hedging of its currency exposure and the retention of excess currency balances. The shares slumped 27p to 38p.

Ellis and Donaldsons discuss merger

Richard Ellis and Donaldsons, the property consultants, have confirmed they are in talks that may lead to a merger. The combined group would have a turnover of nearly £50m and employ more than 800.

Graystone takeover talks terminated

Graystone, the engineer, said discussions regarding a possible takeover offer for the company had been terminated, just 24 hours after announcing that talks were continuing. It said negotiations for the sale of the group's engineering companies were continuing. The group also said it expected pre-tax profits for the year to June to be materially below market expectations. The shares tumbled 42p to 39.5p.

General Cable losses double

General Cable, the telecommunications and cable TV group, announced losses for the six months to June doubled to £25.7m. Sir Anthony Cleaver, chairman, said the overall progress achieved in the first half "has been good in the face of a number of significant challenges".

The number of residential telephone lines connected increased by 27 per cent to 187,700, while business exchange lines connected rose by 53 per cent to 40,900. The number of cable television customers increased by 25 per cent to 156,000. However the net churn rate, the number of people deserting the group, jumped from 23 to 37 per cent.

Portmeirion warns of slow progress

Shares in Portmeirion Pottery fell 65p to 430p after it warned that trading for the second half of 1997 would be difficult and profits for the year as a whole were likely to show little progress over 1996. Pre-tax profits for the six months to June rose 9 per cent to £2.74m thanks to strong US sales but this was primarily due to a one-off celebration for the 25th anniversary of the group's premier pattern, Botanic Garden. UK sales fell and the strength of sterling constrained export sales.

Bunzl poised for £55m acquisition

Bunzl, the paper and plastics group, is poised to buy Unisource's grocery supply businesses for a cash consideration of around £58m (£55m). The business is involved in the distribution and supply of disposable products to supermarkets and has annual sales of more than £300m but made an operating loss of £2.9m in the nine months to June. Bunzl will finance the acquisition from its own resources and the deal should be completed by the end of September.

NIE steps up battle with Ofreg

Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

Northern Ireland Electricity said yesterday it would seek a judicial review of its regulator's refusal to accept the Monopolies and Mergers Commission's proposals on electricity price controls. The move marks the latest stage in a simmering row between the company and Ofreg, the regulator, which is demanding much larger price cuts.

NIE said it had made its decision "with regret" and admitted that the prolonged period of uncertainty was unwelcome for both shareholders and customers.

It follows an unprecedented

move by Douglas McDoom, the director general of Ofreg, to overrule the MMC's report and press ahead with licence changes that would lead to bigger price cuts.

Northern Ireland's decision to go to the court is also unprecedented and will act as a test case on whether the MMC is the final arbitrator in disputes between privatised utilities and their regulators.

NIE said yesterday: "The director general referred the matter to the MMC for resolution and the MMC rejected its original proposals. The MMC's conclusions were quite specific - addressing both public interest issues and the needs of the com-

pany to go forward. NIE believes that the director general has no right to disregard these conclusions."

The matter will go before the High Court in Belfast by the end of next month. It is likely to be six to eight weeks before a ruling is made and if the matter goes to appeal it could push the final outcome into next year.

Under proposals made by Mr McDoom, the revenue capability of Northern Ireland Electricity would have been reduced by £36.5m over the next five years. The company complained that this would hamper its ability to invest in the network and extend it to more remote parts of the province. Electricity bills are high in

Northern Ireland but NIE blames this on the high cost of generation.

The company said yesterday: "If you're going to have a system of arbitration in which the MMC acts as the referee then the referee's decision should be final." It said the director general's challenge to the integrity of the MMC process "is inherently very damaging to the prospect of an orderly system of regulation."

The regulator had no further comment yesterday, saying Mr McDoom was on leave. The MMC also declined to comment.

Northern Ireland Electricity's shares closed 8.5p higher at 444.5p.

Sears break-up under way with £9m sale

Nigel Cope

Sears, the troubled retail conglomerate, made its first move in the expected break-up of its shoe business yesterday when it sold 65 department store concessions to American Group Nine West.

Nine West's Shoe Studio Group, is paying £9m for net assets of £11m. The deal will protect 800 jobs in the 65 largest concessions which will be transferred to Nine West at the end of this month.

Discussions are continuing to sell the remaining 150 concessions. But if Sears cannot find a buyer it will close the rest at the end of January 1998 with the loss of 950 jobs.

Nine West is one of America's largest footwear retailers. It already owns fashion shoe group Pied a Terre in the UK.

The sale of the concessions business is the first disposal since company director David James moved into Sears' troubled British Shoe Corporation subsidiary in the spring. He is finalising the group's business plan to present to the Sears board in the autumn.

Though Sears says it is keeping its options open, City analysts expect formats like Shoe Express, Shoe City, Dolcis and Cable & Co to be sold.

Foreign Exchange Rates as at 15/8/97

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1.5667	90.18	59.56	1000	0.7535	0.7535	0.7535
Canada	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Germany	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
France	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Italy	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Japan	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Spain	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
UK	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Switzerland	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Australia	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
New Zealand	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Saudi Arabia	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31
Singapore	2.2072	71.46	200.40	13491	36.31	36.31	36.31

Interest Rates as at 15/8/97

Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate
UK	7.00%	Germany	2.50%	US	6.50%	Japan	0.50%
France	5.50%	Italy	4.00%	Spain	3.00%	Belgium	2.50%
Netherlands	3.00%	Sweden	3.25%	Switzerland	1.00%	Denmark	4.00%
Portugal	10.00%	Greece	10.00%	Finland	6.00%	South Korea	6.00%
India	10.00%	China	10.00%	Hong Kong	10.00%	Taiwan	10.00%
Singapore	10.00%	Malaysia	10.00%	Thailand	10.00%	Philippines	10.00%
Indonesia	10.00%	Brunei	10.00%	Sri Lanka	10.00%	Myanmar	10.00%
Vietnam	10.00%	Laos	10.00%	Cambodia	10.00%	Timor	10.00%
East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%

Bond Yields as at 15/8/97

Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate
UK	7.00%	Germany	2.50%	US	6.50%	Japan	0.50%
France	5.50%	Italy	4.00%	Spain	3.00%	Belgium	2.50%
Netherlands	3.00%	Sweden	3.25%	Switzerland	1.00%	Denmark	4.00%
Portugal	10.00%	Greece	10.00%	Finland	6.00%	South Korea	6.00%
India	10.00%	China	10.00%	Hong Kong	10.00%	Taiwan	10.00%
Singapore	10.00%	Malaysia	10.00%	Thailand	10.00%	Philippines	10.00%
Indonesia	10.00%	Brunei	10.00%	Sri Lanka	10.00%	Myanmar	10.00%
Vietnam	10.00%	Laos	10.00%	Cambodia	10.00%	Timor	10.00%
East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%

Money Market Rates as at 15/8/97

Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate
UK	7.00%	Germany	2.50%	US	6.50%	Japan	0.50%
France	5.50%	Italy	4.00%	Spain	3.00%	Belgium	2.50%
Netherlands	3.00%	Sweden	3.25%	Switzerland	1.00%	Denmark	4.00%
Portugal	10.00%	Greece	10.00%	Finland	6.00%	South Korea	6.00%
India	10.00%	China	10.00%	Hong Kong	10.00%	Taiwan	10.00%
Singapore	10.00%	Malaysia	10.00%	Thailand	10.00%	Philippines	10.00%
Indonesia	10.00%	Brunei	10.00%	Sri Lanka	10.00%	Myanmar	10.00%
Vietnam	10.00%	Laos	10.00%	Cambodia	10.00%	Timor	10.00%
East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%	East Timor	10.00%

Life Financial Futures as at 15/8/97

Contract		Settlement price
Long Oil	(Sep 97)	114.11
German Govt Bid	(Sep 97)	21.81
Japan Govt Bid	(Sep 97)	10.29
3 Mth Seawing	(Sep 97)	76.855
3 Mth Euribor	(Dec 97)	32.82
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Dec 97)	89.63
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Dec 97)	94.20
3 Mth Euroyen	(Dec 97)	93.51
3 Mth Euroswiss	(Dec 97)	93.55
3 Mth EDU	(Dec 97)	96.41
3 Mth EDU	(Dec 97)	94.20
FTSE 100	(Dec 97)	76.52
FTSE 200	(Dec 97)	5500.00
FTSE 200	(Dec 97)	4730.00

Life FTSE 100 Index 0			
Settlement price:	4991	close	
Series	4900	4	
Aug	16173	4	
Sep	233713	2	
Oct	282741	2	

PHILIPS
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Pick your team to take you to the World Cup Finals

THE INDEPENDENT

With the new league season now underway, a vast array of footballing talent is on parade for the first time. Arsenal and Chelsea have been the busiest clubs in the overseas market, with Marc Overmars the most expensive recruit. The two London clubs can be expected to mount a strong challenge. Liverpool and Newcastle United will also be fighting for the title. However, Alex Ferguson's men will again be the team to beat. With the signings of Teddy Sheringham and Celso Silva from Brazil they are again the bookmakers' favourites to win the title. Can you keep up with the changes? The Independent and Independent on Sunday are giving you the chance. With a budget of £40 million, can you come up with a team to top them all in the Premiership this season?

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- FORMATION A. 4-4-2**
4 Defenders, 4 Midfielders, 2 Strikers
- FORMATION B. 4-3-3**
4 Defenders, 3 Midfielders, 3 Strikers
- FORMATION C. 5-3-2**
5 Defenders, 3 Midfielders, 2 Strikers
- FORMATION D. 3-5-2**
3 Defenders, 5 Midfielders, 2 Strikers

Once you have chosen your formation and team name pick your team of 11 players and 1 manager from the list below. Players can only play in the positions that they are listed under and their total value must not go over £40 million. Having made a note of your team dial our registration hotline. Please try to use a tone telephone - one which makes tone noises when you dial, although pulse telephones can be used to register your team.



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UK 0930-525-259 (pulse)

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HOW TO SCORE

- player scores ☐
- clean sheet ☐
- winning goal ☐
- successful assist ☐
- yellow card ☐
- red card ☐

Every time one of your players scores you get four points. There are four points for a keeper. If a player scores the winning goal, i.e. if there is a one goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal in addition to standard goal related points. Each successful Assist, a pass judged by our experts to lead directly to a goal, will give a player 3 points. The opinion of our experts on the matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

If a player is given a Yellow Card they lose 1 point, if a player is given a Red Card they lose 3 points. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count.

The Premiership Manager that you choose will be awarded 3 points if their real-life team wins, 1 point is awarded if they draw and no points are given if they lose.

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INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)
GOALKEEPERS				455	Cox	Bol	2.5	560	Lundekyam	Sou	1.2	679	Sharpe	Lee	3.5
300	Seaman	Ars	4.0	456	Elliot	Bol	3.0	563	Scales	Tot	3.4	680	Ribeiro	Lee	1.5
303	Lukic	Ars	1.0	457	Fairclough	Bol	2.0	564	Campbell	Tot	4.0	683	Haaland	Lee	2.5
304	Manninger	Ars	3.0	458	Taggart	Bol	2.5	565	Calderwood	Tot	2.9	684	Parker	Lei	2.5
305	Bosnich	AV	4.0	459	Bergsson	Bol	1.5	566	Austin	Tot	2.2	685	Taylor	Lei	1.6
306	Oakes	AV	1.5	460	Duberry	Chel	3.0	567	Edinburgh	Tot	1.6	686	Izzett	Lei	2.1
307	Watson	Bar	1.0	463	Petrescu	Che	3.0	568	Carr	Tot	1.2	687	Lennon	Lei	3.2
308	Lesse	Bar	1.0	464	Lambourde	Che	3.0	569	Mabbutt	Tot	1.5	688	Guppy	Lei	1.7
309	Flowers	Bla	5.2	465	Leboeuf	Che	5.0	570	Dicks	WH	3.5	689	Barnes	Liv	3.0
330	Filan	Bla	1.5	466	Sinclair	Che	2.5	573	Rieper	WH	2.7	690	Redknapp	Liv	5.2
333	Brannagan	Bol	1.2	467	Daish	Cov	2.7	574	Hall	WH	3.0	693	McManaman	Liv	5.9
334	De Goeij	Che	1.0	468	Shaw	Cov	2.2	577	Potts	WH	1.5	694	Thomas	Liv	3.0
335	Grodas	Che	1.0	469	Burrows	Cov	2.2	578	Ferdinand	WH	2.5	695	Leonhardsen	Liv	4.0
336	Ogrizovic	Cov	2.2	470	Haworth	Cov	1.5	579	Impey	WH	2.2	696	Giggs	Man	7.4
337	Hedman	Cov	1.0	473	Edworthy	CP	1.5	580	Cunningham	Wim	1.5	697	Beckham	Man	7.0
338	Nash	CP	1.0	474	Gordon	CP	2.0	583	Thatcher	Wim	2.0	698	Keane	Man	7.0
339	Day	CP	1.0	475	Muscat	CP	1.0	584	McAllister	Wim	1.5	699	Butt	Man	7.0
340	Poom	Der	1.2	476	Tuttle	CP	2.0	585	Kimble	Wim	1.5	700	Poborski	Man	3.5
343	Hoult	Der	1.6	477	Linighan	CP	3.0					703	Lee	New	3.6
344	Southall	Eve	3.0	478	Roberts	CP	3.0					704	Batty	New	3.8
345	Gerrard	Eve	1.5	479	Hreidresson	CP	1.0					705	Gillespie	New	2.5
346	Martyn	Lee	3.3	480	Stimac	CP	3.3					706	Beardsley	New	2.0
347	Beney	Lee	1.2	483	C Powell	Der	1.8					707	Ketshara	New	2.0
348	Keller	Lei	2.5	484	Laursen	Der	1.5					708	Blinker	SW	2.5
349	Poole	Lei	1.5	485	Erano	Der	2.5					709	Hyde	SW	1.8
350	James	Liv	3.5	486	Phelan	Eve	1.9					730	Whittingham	SW	1.7
353	Warner	Liv	1.0	487	Short	Eve	3.0					733	Shearer	SW	3.0
354	Schmeichel	Man	5.5	488	Watson	Eve	2.7					734	Magilton	Sou	2.4
355	Van Der Gouw	Man	1.2	489	Unsworth	Eve	3.0					735	Slater	Sou	1.5
356	Given	New	2.5	490	Hinchcliffe	Eve	3.5					736	Oakley	Sou	1.2
357	Hislop	New	2.5	493	Bilic	Eve	4.0					737	Anderton	Tot	6.0
358	Pressman	SW	3.0	494	Kelly	Lee	3.6					738	Fox	Tot	3.5
359	Taylor	Sou	1.8	495	Wetherall	Lee	2.5					739	Howells	Tot	3.2
360	Beasant	Sou	1.0	496	Molenaar	Lee	2.5					740	Ginola	Tot	3.5
363	Walker	Tot	3.4	497	Dorigo	Lee	1.2					743	Sinton	Tot	3.0
364	Bardsen	Tot	1.0	498	Robertson	Lee	2.2					744	Nielsen	Tot	2.5
365	Miklosko	WH	1.5	499	Walsh	Lei	1.2					745	Williamson	WH	2.0
366	Sullivan	Wim	2.7	500	Whitlow	Lei	1.2					746	Hughes	WH	2.0
DEFENDERS				503	Elliot	Lei	1.6					747	Moncur	WH	2.5
400	Dixon	Ars	2.5	504	Watts	Lei	3.0					748	Bishop	WH	2.5
403	Upson	Ars	2.0	505	Wright	Liv	3.0					749	Berkovic	WH	2.5
404	Petit	Ars	4.2	506	Ruddock	Liv	3.0					750	Lomas	WH	2.0
405	Grimendi	Ars	2.7	507	Harkness	Liv	1.2					753	Jones	WH	3.8
406	Winterburn	Ars	2.5	508	Kvarne	Liv	2.5					754	Earle	WH	3.1
407	Bould	Ars	4.5	509	Bjornebye	Liv	2.5					755	Arday	WH	2.0
408	Adams	Ars	4.5	530	Matteo	Liv	3.0					756	Fear	WH	2.0
409	Keown	Ars	3.0	533	McAteer	Liv	3.7					757	Hughes	WH	2.0
430	Staunton	AV	5.2	534	G Neville	Man	4.2					STRIKERS			
433	Southgate	AV	3.0	535	P Neville	Man	4.2					800	Bergkamp	Ars	7.5
434	Ehiohu	AV	1.2	536	Irwin	Man	2.5					803	Wright	Ars	7.2
435	Nelson	AV	3.0	537	Pallister	Man	3.0					804	Barnor	Ars	2.0
436	Wright	AV	3.0	538	May	Man	3.5					805	Yorke	AV	6.7
437	Scimeca	AV	2.2	539	Johnsen	Man	3.5					806	Joachim	AV	2.4
438	Grayson	AV	2.2	540	Silva	Man	4.1					807	Collymore	AV	8.1
439	Moses	Bar	1.5	543	Albert	New	3.7					808	Wilkinson	Bar	1.2
440	Appleby	Bar	2.0	544	Howe	New	3.7					809	Hendrie	Bar	1.5
443	Thompson	Bar	1.0	545	Peacock	New	3.3					830	Hristov	Bar	1.5
444	Krizan	Bar	1.0	546	Barton	New	2.2					833	Sutton	Bla	4.5
445	Berg	Bla	3.4	547	Beresford	New	2.2					834	Gallagher	Bla	3.0
446	Le Saux	Bla	5.0	548	Blondeau	SW	1.9					835	Dahlin	Bla	4.0
447	Coleman	Bla	3.0	549	Nolan	SW	1.9					836	McGinlay	Bol	2.2
448	Hendry	Bla	4.4	550	Atherton	SW	2.5					837	Blake	Bol	2.7
449	Kenna	Bla	1.9	553	Walker	SW	1.6					838	Zola	Che	9.0
450	Henchoz	Bla	2.0	554	Stefanovic	SW	1.5					839	Vialli	Che	3.5
453	Valery	Bla	3.0	555	Newsome	Sou	1.7					840	M Hughes	Che	4.4
454	Andersson	Bla	2.5	556	Monkou	Sou	2.5					843	Tore Andre Flo	Che	3.0
				557	Dodd	Sou	1.5					844	Dubin	Cov	3.5
				558	Benali	Sou	1.5					MANAGERS			
				559	Van Gobel	Sou	1.5					900	Wenger	Ars	7.5

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Only entries made on the Independent Fantasy Football form will be valid.
2. For your Fantasy Football team selection, you may only use the players published in the official list in the Independent Fantasy Football on Sunday.
3. Entries must consist of 11 players and 1 manager.
4. In the event that a goalkeeper or a defender is substituted, the player substituted and the substitute are both deemed to have played in the match in question. Therefore, if there is a clean sheet both players shall be credited.

5. The Independent Fantasy Football on Sunday overall prize of a trip to the World Cup in France will go to the team manager whose total score exceeds that of any other manager. If there is a tie, a single draw will take place.
6. One pair of tickets to see England play at Wembley will be awarded to the manager whose team's points exceed that of any other manager on a monthly basis, each month running between the dates specified below. In the event of a tie a single draw will take place in the Premier League.
7. The monthly game shall run from 1st to 31st October.

8. Only FA Cup and Premiership matches are eligible for this competition.
9. Only FA Cup and Premiership matches are eligible for this competition.
10. All points scored during all Premiership matches count towards the team manager's total score for the season and the final prize.
11. Team selections once made, cannot be altered until such time as a transfer list may be published in connection with Fantasy Football. There is no limit to number of entries any person or household may make by land, post or telephone.
12. Check date for telephone entries is published on 28th August 1997.
13. The competition is open to residents of the UK and Republic of Ireland only. Entries under 18 must be able to provide written permission from parent or guardian if requested and ask permission from the person who pays the telephone charges before phoning their entry.

14. Incomplete, incorrect or those entries considered obscene will not be accepted. Independent Fantasy Football on Sunday is not responsible for entries lost or delayed in transit. Proof of postage receipt must be accepted as proof of entry.
15. Employees of Newspaper Publishing, Emap, and other related companies are not allowed to enter. Normal Mirror Group rules apply.
16. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Entries made by pay phone will cost approximately double that of a normal phone. Your entry should not last more than 6.5 minutes.
17. The Independent Fantasy Football on Sunday reserves the right to stop the game at any time and change the conditions. The editor's decisions are final in all matters relating to the game. No correspondence, either in writing or by telephone, will be entered into. No refunds will be made.
18. You may receive future offers or information from Newspaper Publishing Ltd or its related companies. If you do not wish to receive these please write to: Independent Fantasy Football, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.
19. Should you have any difficulty registering your team please call our helpline on 0930 525 260. Please note before you ring the helpline the most common problems encountered is that of managers going over budget.

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sport

Waddle's plan to wake up 'sleeping giant'

It was a steamy afternoon in Lincoln and Chris Waddle, former wing wizard and terrace hero from Tyneside to Provence, was helping to cart Burnley's match kit into the changing rooms at Sincil Bank. Alongside him, offering a helping hand, was Frank Teasdale, the Burnley chairman. Waddle, the Burnley chairman, has done anything to it.

Glenn Moore talks to a superstar eager to learn his trade as a manager

to have a look at the pitch to see if the infamous John Beck, now manager of Lincoln, has done anything to it. It looks perfect but one of the groundstaff admits that when Beck arrived he attempted to have the corners banked as on a cycle track so a long ball hit into the corners would hold up. A few holidaying schoolboys are hanging around. As usual they follow Manchester United, not the local team, and are thrilled when Waddle allows them a quick look around the bus - it is the one United use.

This is a rare touch of luxury for Burnley. Waddle admitted that while he had talked about management to a lot of people the most "invaluable" preparation was having a month as a player at Falkirk last

'I'd never resort to direct football. If success means doing that I'd rather walk away'

season and five at Bradford. "I'd been accustomed to clubs where you can have a cheque book around and where everything was geared to the players. Where you were spoilt. I'm not saying those clubs are small clubs but they were not as big as the ones I was used to and that gave me a different expectation."

Waddle has spent £600,000 bringing in former Premiership players Mark Ford (Leeds), Steve Blatherwick (Nottingham Forest), Lee Howey (Sunderland) and Michael Williams (Sheffield Wednesday) along with Marco Gentile, nephew of the infamous Claudio Gentile. He also has an impressive back-room staff of Glenn Roeder, Gordon Cowans and Chris Woods, who is also eligible to play. Not surprisingly, the bookmakers have Burnley down at 9-4 to gain promotion.

"If the bookies are right, I'll be happy but I don't have a magic wand. It would be a massive achievement to go up this season, new players need time to settle. All I can do is get the players to believe in what we are trying to achieve, to play football, give effort and commitment. We won't fail for lack of effort, it will be because we were not good enough or did not have the luck. People say luck levels itself out. I'm not a great believer in that."

Continental theory is in vogue and he will introduce afternoon training later in the season but notes: "Marseilles training wasn't hard. People say 'you do morning and afternoon' but we'd do 40 minutes in the morning and 45 in the afternoon. It is pointless doing it because they do it. It has got to be beneficial. We have cut out all the chips and stuff like that but you can't watch them 24 hours a day. Me and Jean-Pierre Papin used to have a McDonalds after training. You just hope that players are good pros and when they leave training they go home, they eat sensibly, they stay in and do all that, but English players are a breed of their own."

Supporters, too. In the evening Waddle is taunted with chants of "you're not famous anymore" when he warms up, but he had earlier recalled: "I noticed a difference in the way I was perceived when I came back from France. People always say you are a good player in your country but if you go abroad, and do very well, you are looked at differently. When I came back I was known as a great player - and I was a better player. Also, everybody was saying how well I was playing yet I could not get in the England squad."

Ironically, the man who would not pick him was his first opponent as manager, Graham Taylor having returned to Watford. "It wasn't a problem. I don't bear any grudges against Graham. He was manager and he had to make decisions about who to pick and leave out, I'll have to do the same."

Taylor is also at Lincoln, probably to watch Lincoln's Gareth Ainsworth, a modern-day Nigel Callaghan who causes Burnley problems from the start. Burnley are clearly the better footballing side but they have problems on the flanks



Chris Waddle watches his side at Lincoln on Tuesday night. Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

and, despite the first of three superlative saves by Marlon Beresford, are behind to an excellent Phil Stanton goal at half-time.

With 13 minutes to go he is rewarded when Howey heads in a corner. Waddle, pleased with the team's resilience, leads the mutual applause with the 436-strong away support then heads for the dressing room before re-emerging for the long round of media interviews.

Waddle confirms that he has not changed, this week he watched six live and two televised games. "I'll be seeing a lot of football this season. I knew it would be hard until I got into a routine but I haven't just gone and said to Lorna 'I'm taking this job'. I've been offered jobs since I was 32 [he is 36] and we've talked about it for years. She said 'go for it'."

World Cup silences the new season

Glenn Moore on why the Premiership has already ground to a halt

Arsenal's players will all be in action this afternoon. Overmars speeding to complete his househunting, Seaman concentrating hard on his fishing line, Bergkamp gliding between the potted plants at the garden centre and Vieira tackling his English textbook. None of them, however, will be playing football, today or at anytime this week.

Apart, that is, from training. Arsenal are due to train this morning after which, like thousands of football fans, they will suffer from a certain emptiness. One week into the season and the Premiership has downed boots. What is going on?

The root of the problem is in Helsinki. That is where Norway are playing a World Cup qualifier on Wednesday and, in the modern Premiership, that means most clubs have lost a couple of players. Not that the Norwegians are the only ones: almost every country in Europe, not to mention South America and Africa, are engaged in World Cup matches over the next eight days.

The Premiership, with 88 players away, has ground to a halt. Bizarrely, it is Arsenal, with 12 foreigners on their books, who are least affected, as the handful of uninvolved countries include England, Scotland, France and the Netherlands. The only Arsenal player absent is Luis Boa Morte, away with Portugal's Under-21 side, but he is yet to break into the club's first-team squad. So Arsenal could have played today - but they could not have found any opposition. Glenn Hoddle, incidentally, decided it was better to let England's players rest as it was so early in the season and so soon after Le Tournoi.

Why, however, start the Premiership last week knowing it would have to stop immediately? To give England time to prepare for the World Cup finals (assuming they get there) if they had waited until next week the fixture list would have become more congested.

Frustratingly, the Premiership, after resuming on 23 August, breaks again three games and 10 days later to allow England to prepare for the visit of Moldova on 10 September. There are further scheduled breaks in October, for England v Italy, and November, for the second leg of the World Cup qualifying play-off. If England have qualified, they will use that as a training weekend.

If they have not qualified, the weekend fixtures before the play-off first-leg, 25 October, will probably be re-arranged as well. Even if England are not involved several clubs will lose players, and the chairman decide next month whether they should be allowed to postpone matches.

It comes down the usual problem: too much football. Uefa, European football's governing body, has proposed to Fifa, the global authority, that, in future, countries play double-headers, as England did notoriously in Poland and Norway in 1993, to reduce the number of international weeks.

However, Uefa could stop extending its club competitions and force countries such as San Marino to pre-qualify. Meanwhile, the Premiership could fulfil the promise of its foundation, and reduce to clubs. Neither scenario is likely, because revenue - the driver behind most policy decisions - would be affected.

THE PREMIERSHIP INTERNATIONALS

List includes Premiership players on international duty next week. Injured players excluded.
 Arsenal (12): Bos Morte (Port U-21).
 Aston Villa (14): Stuart Pearce (Rep of Ire), D. Hughes (Rep of Ire), Neilson (Rep of Ire).
 Birmingham (12): Taylor (USA), Heston (Neth).
 Blackburn (12): Doherty, Anderson (Ireland), Norman (Rep of Ire), Wardell (Rep of Ire), Wilson (Rep of Ire).
 Bolton (12): Taylor (USA), Heston (Neth).
 Chelsea (15): Pearce (Rep of Ire), G. Smith (Rep of Ire), M. Hughes (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Coventry (12): Heston (Neth), Norman (Rep of Ire), O'Neill (Rep of Ire), O'Neill (Rep of Ire).
 Crystal Palace (12): Quinn (Rep of Ire), M. Wright (Rep of Ire), Zoller (Rep of Ire).
 Derby County (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Everton (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Leeds (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Liverpool (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Manchester City (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Manchester United (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Newcastle (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Nottingham Forest (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Norwich City (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Queens Park Rangers (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Sheffield Wednesday (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Southampton (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Tottenham Hotspur (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Watford (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 West Ham (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).
 Wimbledon (12): Taylor (Rep of Ire), Norman (Rep of Ire), P. Wright (Rep of Ire).

No 219 Manchester United FAN'S EYE VIEW

by Louise Convisser

I have a secret which nobody really knows about, although those closest to me have an inkling that something may not be quite right. I am a respectable middle-class mother from a leafy suburb of north-west London, and I am not having an affair. Nor am I squandering money on vodka or scratch cards. My secret is a growing obsession with Manchester United, who everyone else seems to love to hate.

How did this all begin? After all, men and young boys are supposed to feel passionate about football, not women from Pinner approaching middle age. I have certainly been captivated by United and life may never be the same again. My family is divided on football, with my two young sons supporting the same team as their Mum, my daughter a rare breed of Liverpool fan who does not hate MUFC and my husband, a rather tormented but relieved Brighton fan. Although I have never been the sort to jump on the female "football is boring" bandwagon, I may have complained about it being on the television constantly or not understood my husband's need to read the sports pages first without checking to find out if World War Three has broken out.

I feel rather sorry for my husband at the moment. It cannot be easy when your wife of 13 years suddenly seems to know the odd fact about football that you don't. I gave him little sympathy over the plight of poor Brighton last season, distracted by my own concerns about United's fate in Europe.

I am quite conscious not to join in too much when we have friends round. Football chatter usually leaves the other women bored stiff and the men unsure. Every time my husband asks me out for an evening we have to

Nike Air Max Megadome here we come

How often, in today's moneyed, get-rich-quick football climate, is a club as small and as unsophisticated as Scunthorpe able to steel a march on its more wealthy peers?

The answer is, about as often as John Beresford scores a goal, which is very occasionally. Yet in 1988 the Irons (without the aid of a Football Trust grant, since this was before the Taylor Report) became the first club since Southend uprooted to Roots Hall in 1955, to move to a new stadium, vacating the Old Show Ground in favour of nearby Glanford Park. Last night Sunderland continued the trend, and by the time Reading and Oxford complete relocations next year, the total cost of new ground development since Scunthorpe set the ball rolling will top £200m.

Nothing wrong with that: most of the clubs concerned had their hand forced by the recommendations of the Taylor Report, and by the increasing demand for seats generated by football's current popularity.

However, less commendable are the names being chosen for these new stadiums, which in some cases appear to do nothing but pay lip service to a club sponsor or further inflate the ego of a well-to-do chairman.

Glanford Park and the Bescot Stadium (which became Whistl's new home in 1990) are understandable - if uninspiring - choices, but the names of the localities, Wycombe chose Adams Park in honour of patron Jack Adams, while the Deva Stadium was so-called since it's the Roman name for Chester. An elderly Northampton fan suggested Sidfields after a popular local recreation area, while Derby's Pride Park was favoured by the New Baseball Ground were among the other choices, but perhaps Dark Park would be a more appropriate choice after Wednesday night's floodlight failure fiasco) and is the name of the estate on which the ground stands. Headline writers should have some fun with that one.

Bolton's Reebok Stadium simply reflects the current influence that sponsors have on the game, which I find worrying. At least Middlebrough's Celtic Riverside Stadium is almost universally referred to without the sponsor's prefix, but how long will it be, for heaven's sake, before we have the Ford Puma Park, the Kellogg's Strike Stadium, or even the Nike Air Max Megadome? Huddersfield's choice of the Alfred McAlpine Stadium spoils what is a magnificent ground.

Olivia Blair



ON SATURDAY

Stoke's selection of the Britannia Stadium is marginally more acceptable, even if it merely pays homage to a small (ish) building society who paid just £1.3m over 10 years for the honour, at least it wasn't named after the nearby Trentham Lakes, or called the Side-way Stadium (pronounced Siddyway) after the local area of the same name, which sounds like a place where Ray Wilkins ought to finish his career. Martin Smith, editor of the *Catwalk* magazine admits the fans were upset at first: "We wanted it named after Sir Stanley Matthews, but it's grown on us. It keeps the regal link with the Victoria Ground, and when we heard Sunderland's choice, quite frankly we were mopping our brows."

Ah, yes, Sunderland. Now am I alone in thinking that there's something rather incongruous about a club which is facing the prospect of playing host to the likes of Bury, Stockport and Crewe, and which hasn't won anything of note since the FA Cup in 1973, sharing a stadium name with one of the great European venues? Obviously not, because the reaction of the Sunderland fans has been as negative as Arsenal under George Graham; they'd have preferred the more conservative Wearmouth, or even, apparently, the Mackem Stadium. In fact, the only positive reaction has come from Newcastle fans who, inevitably, have christened it the Sunderland Stadium of Shame.

On a positive note the club should be praised for their ambition; the 42,000 capacity makes Sunderland the largest new stadium of the decade, and there's provision to increase capacity to 68,000. But relegation put paid to the club's idea of selling the names of the stadium and all four stands to a commercial company; instead, Stadium of Light apparently has a tenuous connection with Davy's Lamp, since it's on the site of the old Wearmouth Colliery, and you're meant to be able to see the stadium lights on

Jansen pleads for patience

Scottish football

Celtic's head coach, Wim Jansen, yesterday urged his players to show some patience against Dunfermline Athletic in today's top Premier Division fixture - although he admitted it was a quality unlikely to be in evidence from the Parkhead faithful.

In his first home league game in charge, Jansen plans to reap three vital points in the wake of the opening 2-1 loss to Hibernian at Easter Road a fortnight ago. The Dutchman feels his side may need to bide their time to achieve victory, blaming a lack of calm in the main cause for Tuesday's 2-1 Uefa Cup defeat away to Trol Innsbruck.

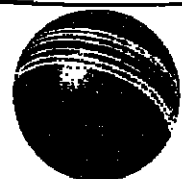
"I am keen to establish our own style of playing, which were a long way from achieving during the first half in Austria," Jansen said. "After the break we were closer to the way I want us to play. When everybody played in their position we were more comfortable, with more options in attack. I don't expect the crowd to be patient (against Dunfermline) because they always want you to win well, but we must be relaxed."

Stéphane Mahé, forced off at half-time against Trol with a rib injury, is unlikely to play today, while Alan Stubbs and Morten Wieghorst are doubtful.

Despite their unfortunate experiences with Jorge Cadete, who is languishing in Lisbon suffering from stress, Celtic are pursuing another Portuguese striker. They have made a £1.5m bid for Sporting Lisbon's Paulo Alves, and are also chasing the Hamburg goalkeeper, Richard Goltz. Cadete, despite his alleged health problems, has been having talks with the Spanish First Division club Celta Vigo.

MAJOR WEEKEND FOOTBALL FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK					
TODAY					
3.0 (unless stated)					
Nationwide Football League					
First Division					
1. Charlton v Oxford	10. Carlisle v Walsford	24. Rochdale v Mansfield	Bell's Scottish League	42. East Fife v Stirling Albion	<p>Stephane Mahé, forced off at half-time against Trol with a rib injury, is unlikely to play today, while Alan Stubbs and Morten Wieghorst are doubtful.</p> <p>Despite their unfortunate experiences with Jorge Cadete, who is languishing in Lisbon suffering from stress, Celtic are pursuing another Portuguese striker. They have made a £1.5m bid for Sporting Lisbon's Paulo Alves, and are also chasing the Hamburg goalkeeper, Richard Golz. Cadete, despite his alleged health problems, has been having talks with the Spanish First Division club Celva.</p>
2. Grimsby v West Bromwich	11. Plymouth v Gillingham	25. Southampton v Leyton Orient	Premier Division	43. Livingston v Stranraer	
3. Portsmouth v Port Vale	12. Preston v Millwall	26. Torquay v Scarborough	32. Celtic v Dunfermline	44. Queen of South v Clydebank	
4. Reading v Swindon	13. Walsley v Fulham		33. Hearts v Aberdeen		
5. Stockport v Bury	14. Wykeham v Oldham	Gill Vauxhall Conference	34. Motherwell v St Johnstone	Third Division	
6. Woking v Sharnfield	15. York v Bristol Rovers	27. Dover v Cheltenham		45. Albion Rovers v Berwick	
Second Division					
7. Bournemouth v Wigan	16. Barnet v Exeter	28. Gateshead v Ramsgate	First Division	46. Ayr v Cowdenbeath	
8. Brentford v Queens Park	17. Brighton v Macclesfield	29. Hayes v Halifax	35. Falkirk v Ayr	47. Arbroath v East Stirling	
9. Bristol City v Blackpool	18. Cambridge v Rotherham	30. Hereford v Welling	36. Morton v Hamilton	48. Dunfermline v Moray	
10. Burnley v Gillingham	19. Portsmouth v Cardiff	31. Kettering v Slough (3.15)	37. Partick v Dundee	49. Ross County v Queen's Park	
	20. Doncaster v Peterborough	32. Morecambe v Leek	38. Raith v Airdrie		
	21. Hartlepool v Colchester	33. Rushden v Northwich	39. St Mirren v Springburn	TOMORROW	
	22. Hull v Notts County	34. Southport v Hednesford	Second Division	Bell's Scottish League	
	23. Lincoln v Shrewsbury	35. Stalybridge v Kidderminster	40. Brechin v Inverness CT	Premier Division	
		36. Woking v Telford	41. Clyde v Forfar	Dundee Utd v Hibernian (4.0)	
		37. Yeovil v Stevenage			

150 من الامل



Testing dilemma
Derek Pringle on the options
facing England's selectors, page 21

sport

Waddle's wake-up call
Burnley's new player-manager has
to rouse 'sleeping giant', page 24

Barcelona decide against McManaman

Football

DERRICK WHYTE
AND ALAN NIXON

Steve McManaman's proposed transfer from Liverpool to Barcelona fell through yesterday amid conflicting reports over the reasons for the collapse of his £12m move. While the England international's excessive wage demands were being blamed in some quarters, it also appeared that Barcelona may have had a late change of

heart and decided that he was not the player they needed.

Sources close to Anfield suggested that the deal had been scuppered by McManaman's demand for a six-year contract worth £50,000 per week. McManaman was represented in negotiations by his adviser, Simon Fuller, who is also manager of the Spice Girls.

In a statement released yesterday Liverpool said they had given McManaman permission to talk to Barcelona after receiving an "eight-figure offer"

from the Spanish club. Although Liverpool said that permission had been given despite the fact that they did not want the player to leave, it seems clear that they were prepared to sell. McManaman's present five-year deal has two years left to run, but the statement said that several months of negotiations over a new deal with the player had so far proved unsuccessful.

Under the Bosman ruling players are able to move overseas without a transfer fee at the end of their contracts, and it

seems likely that Liverpool decided now might be the time to cash in on McManaman. After being told of Barcelona's interest, McManaman flew to Spain to open negotiations. Barcelona, however, were not prepared to meet his pay demands, which would have cost the club a total of more than £27m in transfer fee and wages over six years.

The Spanish club had been thinking in terms of £30,000 a week rather than £50,000 (McManaman is believed to

earn £12,000 per week under his current contract with Liverpool), which would still have meant the player earning £9.5m over the length of his contract.

However, it emerged yesterday that Barcelona may not have ultimately pursued their interest in McManaman under any circumstances. After Barcelona's poor performance on Wednesday night, when they could only beat the Latvians of Skonto Riga 3-2 in the first leg of their European Cup qualifying round tie, a meeting was

held between Luis Nunez, the Barcelona president, Joan Gaspart, the vice-president, and Louis van Gaal, the coach.

Sources in Barcelona said that at the meeting it was decided that the club needed to recruit an attacking wing player in the McManaman mould - but that he had to be a proven goalscorer. It is widely recognised that one of the major weaknesses in McManaman's game is his finishing.

Barcelona had also been interested in Rivaldo, an attacking

midfield player who scored 21 goals in 41 matches for Deportivo La Coruña last season. On Thursday they opened negotiations with the Brazilian and yesterday completed his purchase for £16.7m, the second highest fee ever paid after their own sale of Ronaldo to Internazionale. Although the fee was higher than that proposed for McManaman, his wages were said to be "only" £16,000 a week.

McManaman flew to Majorca yesterday, while Liverpool said they now hoped to per-

suade him to sign a new contract. As he can be expected to make similar demands of Liverpool negotiations are unlikely to reach a speedy conclusion.

It remains to be seen what the Anfield crowd will make of this week's events. Some supporters had already been expressing their frustration at McManaman's continuing failure to realise fully his undoubted promise and this episode may reinforce his less than complimentary image as a "Spice Boy".

The 'Pocket Rocket' rides into record books

Catherine Riley meets the youngest motorcyclist in tomorrow's Grand Prix

It is almost 20 years to the day that "Rocket" Ron Haslam's Suzuki went up in flames following a spectacular crash in the first mainland British motorcycle Grand Prix at Silverstone. But as he looks forward to tomorrow's meeting at Donington, Haslam is more nervous than in all his years of grand prix and TT racing, because, at the age of just 14, his son, Leon, will become the youngest rider ever in a senior event. He will take part in one of the support races, the Honda CB500 Cup.

"I didn't realise how much pressure is on - especially when it's your own son," Haslam said. "I'm pleased that he's going that way, but it's more frightening than I expected."

Leon is one of motorcycling's biggest hopes, hence the Auto Cycle Union's unprecedented decision to grant him a special licence to race at Donington. Following his success in the under-16 motorcycle championships, this season Leon moved up to the Carnell-Gilera scooter championship, in which he is 79 points clear of his nearest challengers.

"The 500cc bike is a big step up from the scooters," Haslam senior says. "From a scooter to a proper bike - with big wheels and quite a lot of power there - is a huge jump. I tested him on it for a couple of days at Donington and he handled it all right. I followed him and made sure he didn't get in any trouble and also made sure he could physically handle the bike, so we've worked pretty hard at that."

Leon, in all other respects a normal teenager, who likes playing football, swimming and running, is fairly relaxed about racing against adults at speeds of up to 115mph on a

bike he will not be allowed to ride on the road for several years.

"I've been round bikes for most of my life and I've done moto-cross for many years. This year I've done the scooters and it's just natural to move up. It's a bit bigger than the bikes I've been on, but I cope with it OK."

But when pushed, the "Pocket Rocket", as he is known, will admit to being both nervous and excited. "We can't get him to leave the track," his father says. "We have to try and calm him down because his excitement is just building up and up. With his enthusiasm getting that high, it's easy for him to make mistakes, so we're trying to calm him down a bit and get him to go out there and simply enjoy it."

Leon is well aware of the dangers of the sport. Two years in succession he was leading the moto-cross championship going into the final round - and broke his leg both times.

"It's taught me to respect the bike. I feel my riding has been a lot smoother since I broke my legs. It is really important in road racing to keep calm and keep your riding smooth. Breaking my legs made me think, and in a way it helped calm me down."

Leon has been riding since he was eight. "One day he said he wanted to have a go at moto-cross. That started the ball rolling and it's gone on from there," Haslam recalls. So he didn't push him into it? "I'm the one that holds him back - he can't get enough of it."

"My wife, Anne, and I have put restrictions on him. We don't expect him to be Einstein, but we do expect him to get average grades. The understanding is that as long as



Leon Haslam, aged 14, relaxes yesterday before tomorrow's British Grand Prix. Photograph: Mike Cooper/Allsport

he achieves that then the bikes can carry on. If he falls below average, then we stop the bikes."

Grades permitting, what does Leon want to do next? "Carrying on with bikes is probably my aim for the next

few years and try and get into grand prix, like my dad, or superbikes." His father is aiming a little lower. "Well, 125s next season - if he can get the licence."

And then? "I'll just let him go, to be honest, if he wants

to do that. If it doesn't last then fair enough, but I can't see it. He'll want to go all the way with it and as he's had such an early start, hopefully he can do better than I did."

Ask Leon what he expects from his first major outing and

the excited teenager is gone, in his place a determined professional. "When you're on the track you always give 100 per cent and try and push your hardest, but I'm hoping for a podium position - that would be a really good result."

Rush links up with Dalglish

Football
ALAN NIXON
AND NICK HARRIS

Ian Rush last night became the latest Liverpool player of yesterday to move to Newcastle when he signed a one-year deal with the club with an option for a further year. He was granted a free transfer from Leeds, where he has reportedly been unsettled since the arrival of George Graham as manager.

The 35-year-old Welsh international will be eligible to take part in the Champions' League group stage if Newcastle progress past Croatia Zagreb (they are 2-1 up after the first leg of the preliminary round), and may be called upon to deputise for the injured Alan Shearer.

The Newcastle manager, Kenny Dalglish, who earlier this week also signed the 33-year-old John Barnes on a free transfer from Liverpool, joked yesterday: "We are developing our youth policy."

Rush's move to St James' Park reunites him not only with Dalglish, under whom he played at Anfield, but also the former

Liverpool forwards Barnes and the 36-year-old Peter Beardsley. All four were part of Liverpool's Championship-winning team in the 1987-88 season.

Leicester City yesterday completed the signing of striker Tony Cottee, who is returning to England after a spell in Malaysia with Selangor, the club he joined from West Ham last season.

Cottee, 32, joined Leicester in a £500,000 deal on a two-year contract, and is eligible to play for the Foxes in the UEFA Cup. He said: "Malaysia were only three years into their professional league and I was not ready to be put out to grass. I missed England, my home, my family and wanted to come back. Now it is up to me to prove that I am good enough to win a first-team place at Leicester."

The Manchester United defender David May yesterday signed a new £3m deal that will keep him at Old Trafford until 2003. Martin Edwards, the United chairman, agreed the six-year, £10,000-a-week contract in order to avoid the possibility of losing the player for nothing at the end of the season, when his current contract would have expired.

In Monday's 24-page sports section



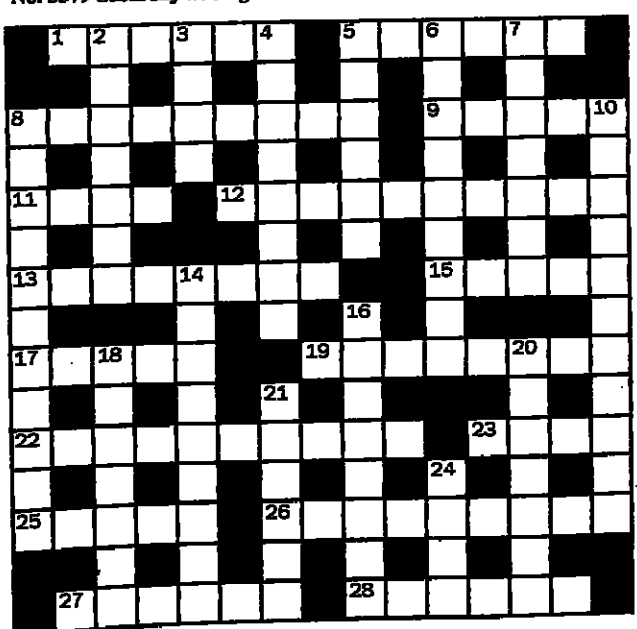
'I don't regard captaincy as a burden, so giving it away, if that's what I decide to do, will not be a release. Obviously in the aftermath of defeats like Headingley and Trent Bridge, there is a backlash pointed at the captain, which is fair enough. I don't balk at the criticism, it's part of the territory.'

In an exclusive interview, Michael Atherton talks to Derek Pringle about his cricketing future and his disappointment at losing the Ashes series against Australia

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3379 Saturday 16 August

By Phil



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

DISCOURAGED
GOLDEN
BATTLECRY
MAY
NEON
A V J S
ISOMERS
R C L
VILLUM
ABSORBED
S L E D
N I A R A
E M N N Y
STARSTRUCK
L E S S E E

ACROSS

- Coach or train? (6)
- What's unctuous and unexciting about a society? (6)
- Covering a one-sided fight? (5, 4)
- Old Penny Black that's brought in not acceptable, prompting suspicion (5)
- Playing skat's a chore (4)
- State of being out and in? Get to the point (6, 4)
- Persistence shown by a town after a decade (8)
- Extreme extract from baleful tragedy (5)
- Very nice old stage routine (5)
- Handle roughly till tear flows (3, 5)
- How copies appear, despite what's been said (3, 4)
- Man giving sign of affection and love (4)
- Gambling game: deal a couple, heartlessly (5)
- Unexpectedly ousted and surprised (9)
- Railways no longer exemplary, losing heart describing train in service? (6)
- Odds on this spot being round? (6)

DOWN

- Study involves lips, red (7)
- Girl participating in school games (4)
- Leave it fluttering to hover over the ground? (8)
- Food flavouring in recipe accepted by female in charge (6)
- Rules tend to get broken, in the final analysis (3, 6)
- Kept a clean sheet? United team's first in to cheer (4, 3)
- Fold instructions for a bricklayer? (2, 2, 3, 4)
- Push, in this case, for a clinching argument (3, 4, 4)
- Fall ill as a result of fish (frozen) (5, 4)
- Plant list came in an edited version (8)
- With many famous actors a couple of lines introduction is more than enough! (3-4)
- European cash got with a stick-up in foreign country (7)
- Attack when on boat-trip (6)
- Turned up on quiet army offensive (4)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5PL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: M. Green, Loughborough; J. Whitley, Oucham; R. Watton, Collyer; K. Hay, Kidlington; W. Kaye, Bradford.

Winger Evans signs for Bath

Rugby Union

Llanelli lost its favourite son yesterday as Bath pulled off the transfer coup of the summer by signing the Wales and Lions wing Iwan Evans.

The Welsh record cap holder agreed a two-year contract following negotiations with Bath that were completed just before yesterday's Heineken European Cup deadline. Bath are believed to have paid around £75,000 to secure his services, while Evans can expect to command a six-figure salary at the Recreation Ground. Evans, who has 71 caps for Wales, will be in familiar territory when he makes his debut for Bath in their opening European Cup match at Sardis Road in Pontypridd on 6 September.

Evans misses Bath's opening Allied Dunbar Premiership games against Newcastle and Harlequins. The 33-year-old is getting married next Saturday and will be on honeymoon for two weeks. Bath are desperate for his arrival

as their three other experienced wings, Simon Gheoghegan, Adedayo Adebayo and Jon Sleightholme, are all injured.

The Bath coach, Andy Robinson, was delighted with his new player after narrowly failing to sign Gregor Townsend from Northampton. "His Lions performance in South Africa this summer speaks for itself," he said.

Another Lions hero could also be on the move as Northampton yesterday provided the strongest possible indication that their rugby director, Ian McGeechan, could become the new England coach.

The Rugby Football Union are staying silent over any suggestion that the Lions coach's appointment is now a formality once Jack Rowell's part-time contract expires on 31 August. But Northampton virtually gave the game away when their millionaire backer, Keith Barwell, confirmed they had made Sale a six-figure offer for the New Zealander John Mitchell. Sale have reportedly dismissed the bid for their player-coach.

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